*Week ending September 12 1953*
*Every Wednesday Fourpence*

# JOHN BULL

A brilliant new novel of suspense starts this week

## DEATH AND THE SKY ABOVE

by ANDREW GARVE

# BEER AND SKITTLES

## — *and jolly good company too!*

*Photographed by BERTRAM FOLLETT*

FOR THIRSTY CUSTOMERS with sporting instincts Britain's 'Locals' provide more than good beer. Their bars abound with games and pastimes to add pleasure to your leisure. Some are new, some old as the hills. Some, like the ubiquitous Darts, you will find in almost every pub from Portsmouth to Perth. Others are popular in this part of the country — unknown in that.

But a game's a game, whatever pub you play it in. What would 'The Local' be without its local pastimes?

**STEADY LADY!** *All else forgotten, she concentrates upon the matter in hand . . . in this case the captive ball of the table skittles which have superseded the original skittle alley — now few and far between. The critics around her are good judges of beer* and *skittles.*

**'3 IN A BED'** *means three ha'pennies in one section of the mellowed Shove Ha'penny board which has an honoured place in many a bar. A sure touch and a good eye for a 'lay' are essential to Shove Ha'penny honours.*

**THREES and FIVES.** *There are many varieties of this pleasant game which delight those who take their pleasures quietly, with a glass of good beer at their elbows.*

**DARTS.** *Britain's most popular bar pastime, played different ways in different parts, but fundamentally the same fascinating and skilful game. Darts Clubs flourish in most 'Locals' and inter-pub rivalry is keen. Once again a glass of good beer is an essential part of the picture.*

*The original and ancient version of this grand old game, still played vigorously in those pubs fortunate enough to possess a Skittle Alley. It's fun, but it's thirsty work too. Why worry? There's a plentiful supply of good beer on hand!*

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ISSUED BY THE BREWERS' SOCIETY, 42 PORTMAN SQ., LONDON, W.1.

## EDITORIAL

# *Slim chance*

WITH diets, pills, strenuous exercise, hot baths and massage, millions of people are trying to give themselves thin bodies.

An American survey shows that a quarter of the population is dieting; twenty-five million dollars' worth of "low calorie" foods are sold in the U.S.A. every year.

Six doctors reported to this year's British Medical Association conference that overweight and obesity make people more liable to diabetes, varicose veins, arthritis and other ailments, and generally shorten life.

BUT their experiments in doing something about it are not very encouraging. Dr. Leonard Howells told how he treated 156 fat patients in Cardiff by dieting, which is the only effective method; forty-six achieved a satisfactory loss of weight, while twenty-seven lost a little. Of the rest, fifty-six could not keep it up and twenty-seven, while valiantly having their usual portions reduced and choice dishes forbidden, still did not lose any weight at all.

MISS MONROE
*From Nell Gwynn onwards. . .*

Not everybody is trying to get thinner. Mrs. Bessie Braddock, the fifteen-stone, fifty-inch bust, forty-inch waist, fifty-inch hips M.P., says: "It is very foolish to interfere with natural development unless a doctor advises that it is absolutely necessary for a weak heart or some other such reason. Slimming all too easily reduces the resistance. I should never think of doing it."

NOR would have the Venus de Milo, whose measurements of 5 ft. 4 in. high, 37-in. bust, 26-in. waist, 38-in. hips would send many a modern girl to the dietetic regime of an Indian fakir.

Slimming is all very well for reasons of health. And most of us might benefit from some reduction in the amount of sugar and starch we eat.

But a life insurance company has worked out a table of ideal weights, showing that a large-framed 5 ft. 8 in. man can be as heavy as thirteen stone before he need worry about his weight. A large-framed 5 ft. 4 in. woman can be eleven stone.

SUCCESSFUL people, from Nell Gwynn to Miss Marilyn Monroe, have shown that a well-filled gown can be quite attractive. But last month fat girls in the American Women's Army Corps were told "Slim—by order."

A spokeswoman of the British W.R.A.C. commented: "Not here—we like them all shapes and sizes." And so we do. We have a sense of proportion.

## THIS WEEK'S COVER

THEY turned off the water, the electricity, the gas, and shut all the windows. But they forgot to tell the tradespeople, and they didn't fill in Form P944B asking the Post Office to redirect mail. Result: a fortnight's curdled milk, a pile of news-less newspapers, a letterbox full of bills, and stale loaves at the back door. "Still, the children are able to smile," says artist Gerald Fancett. "And the whole family had a wonderful holiday."

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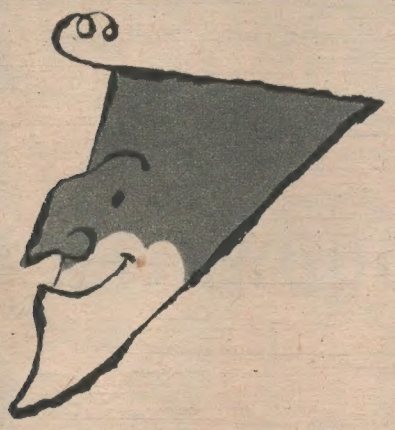

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FROM ALL CHEMISTS

# FREE SPEECH

## Children may prove who rules a home

MY WIFE AND I were discussing those of our school friends who are married and have children. "They prove a little theory of mine," said my wife. "It shows who really is boss in a household."

She explained her test. "Mary X dominates her husband," she said, "and as a result, all her children are girls. On the other hand, there's no doubt that Bill Y rules his house—and he has two boys." We went through the list of our friends and, with only two exceptions, my wife's theory seemed to hold good. We have always thought that we were fairly evenly matched, but now that we are expecting our first child, we can hardly wait to see who really rules our roost.—J. F., Haywards Heath, Sussex.

### *Perfect Gentlemen*

HOLIDAYING on the Continent this summer, I found that the Englishman still has the reputation of being a gentleman. In Germany, for example, I was embarrassed by the effusive thanks of an old lady to whom I gave up my seat in a tram. On another occasion, I had to remove a German workman who took the seat I offered to a woman. I often saw wives standing while their husbands sat.—P. G. S., Rugby.

. . . Last week I stayed with a young couple who had just returned from the East. They are shocked at the manners of our menfolk. The wife is shortly expecting a baby, yet she had to stand in buses, while young men sat. A Chinese, say the couple, would have offered to stand.—MRS. J. H. GREEN, Tavistock, Devon.

### *Under-sea History*

THE idea of human torpedoes, described in JOHN BULL'S serial, "Above Us The Waves," is apparently not new. I enclose a cartoon

from *Punch* of 1896. — DONALD J. GOLD, Green Ridge, Brighton, Sussex.

*The caption to "Punch's" fanciful cartoon, reproduced by permission of the proprietors, is: "The suggested corps of submarine cavalry (Royal Mounted Submarines) not included in this year's estimates." Yet thirteen years later, in 1909, the Admiralty rejected a design for a one-man torpedo. In 1915 the idea was revived—and dropped again. In 1936, the Italian Navy developed human torpedoes, and the first British model was built in 1942. This week's instalment of "Above Us The Waves" begins on page 19.*

### *Old And New*

THE letter from N. F. H., of Basingstoke, made me smile, because I, too, have gone back to the old-fashioned pictures from my mother's home. When I married, I embroidered some panels and put them in modern frames. They went well with cream-distempered walls. Then we moved to a Victorian house, and my frames were lost on the huge walls. Now, the old wide-framed pictures have come into their own again. —MRS. E. J., Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

### *Below The Belt*

A RECENT issue of JOHN BULL mentioned McDonald Hobley's habit of wearing full evening dress, except for flannel trousers, when making television announcements seated at a table. I saw much the same kind of thing from a side box at the Paris Opera. From where I sat I could see all the players of the orchestra. They wore the strangest assortment of clothes. All had the conventional evening dress top, but below, out of view of the main audience, they wore trousers of various colours, including plus-fours. — MRS. E. NEWMAN, King's Court, Wembley Park, Middlesex.

**RICHARD BURTON**

*The Welsh boxer who became the star all Hollywood is seeking*

**IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK**

### *Stand And Deliver*

DOES R. D., of Watford, who suggested tolls to pay for better roads, realize that we motorists pay enough already? Between us, we hand over £370 million a year, in purchase tax, road tax and petrol tax. Of this, only £80 million is spent on the roads.—J. G. WATTERS, York.

### *Life Saver*

JOHN BULL'S Editorial, "Found Drowned" (August 29), mentioned a new system of artificial respiration—the Holger Nielsen method. As a swimming instructor, I have used the Schäfer and Silvester methods for many years. But recently I noticed an unfamiliar type of resuscitation being used, and I have decided it was probably Nielsen's method. It certainly seemed less fatiguing for the rescuer.—B. J., Weston-super-Mare.

*Holger Nielsen's method, perfected before the war, causes very deep breathing. Place the victim face down, with his head turned to one side and resting on his hands. Kneel at his head and, thumbs touching, fingers spread, press down on the back. The wrists should be level with his armpits. Release pressure smoothly, and rock back, lifting his elbows. Repeat twelve times a minute. When breathing starts, keep time to its rhythm.*

### *Royal Stamp*

INTO the post office where I work came a very small boy. He was clutching a handful of coins—threepenny pieces, halfpennies, and even

farthings. "Five little Annes, please," he demanded. He repeated this several times, but I was completely baffled until his mother came in and explained. "He wants five sixpenny savings stamps," she said. "He calls them that because of the portrait of Princess Anne on them."—MRS. JOAN LAIGHT, Knole Drive, Southgate.

### *Doctor's Note*

NOT all messages sent by doctors are serious ("Free Speech," August 22). An elderly lady I know was overcome with curiosity while waiting to see a specialist, and opened her doctor's letter. This is what it said: "The patient has just returned from a two-month holiday—and we poor devils can't get a day!"— C. G. A., Derby.

. . . One doctor sent me a report on a patient which said: "This pentadactyl has Alopecia, with a slight residual penicil supravening a penumbra on a peltate Angioma, with pentsetemon discoloration." Translated, it meant: "This man is going bald through dandruff. There is a shield-shaped birthmark bordering a small tuft of hair that has been left." — ERIC T. C. WILLIAMS, Ilford, Essex.

### *Happy Family*

I WAS travelling to the coast by train when a swarm of children, followed by a man and a woman with a baby in arms, entered my compartment. It's going to be pandemonium for the next two hours, I thought. But the man took charge of the baby, and the eldest boy, about ten, played quiet paper games with the

other five boys. The mother nursed two little girls, and handed round drinks of "pop" and tea. I asked if the children were all hers. She laughed and said: "Only seven of them. We brought the other two lads because their mother's ill." It was pouring with rain when we reached the coast. "I hope you have an enjoyable day," I said doubtfully. "Oh, we shall," the husband replied. "We're always happy when we've got the children together." — MRS. A. M. LARGE, Derbyshire.

**Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.**

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## PRACTICAL RESULTS

*Student* 171/162.—I have sold my story to **EVERYWOMAN** for 25 guineas. *Student* 1106/154.—The **B.B.C.** accepted the script for the Light Programme—fee 9 guineas—after my first lesson! *Student* 141/76.—The article which I wrote for the Second Test Paper appeared in the **SUNDAY MAIL**. Thanks for the recommendation. *Student* 2317/185.—I am pleased to say that my article for Lesson Two has been accepted by the magazine **TRAVEL**. *Student* 2003/1610.—The Course has already borne fruit, for I have sold an article to **PSYCHOLOGY** for 2 guineas. *Student* 1834/152.—. . . together with cheque, which I obtained from the **CHRISTIAN HERALD** for the article which I originally wrote for the Second Test Paper. *Student* 761/2812.—I have just sold my first story to **FAMILY STAR** for 4 guineas, and am I thrilled! *Student* 473/28.—I have had my first short story accepted by the Editor of **HOME REVIEW**. *Student* 1437/217.—. . . on your advice I sent my article with a covering letter to the **LIVERPOOL ECHO** and barely three weeks had elapsed before I had the pleasure of seeing it in print. *Student* 1328/2110.—**GLAMOUR** have paid me 7 guineas for a short story and the **B.B.C.** has accepted a fairy story, to be adapted for the Children's Hour. *Student* 984/227.—I also have to report the sale of a further fairy story to the Co-operative Press, for inclusion in their **SUNSHINE ANNUAL**, payment 2 guineas. *Student* 1518/69.—**MODERN WOMAN** have paid 5 guineas on acceptance of my article. *Student* 181/282.—You may be interested to hear that yesterday I had a letter from the Editor of the **ARGOSY**—they have offered me 25 guineas for my story. *Student* 2577/3015.—I have had my story accepted by **BLACKWOODS**, who are paying me £25 for it; also one or two others, at smaller rates of course, for service magazines. *Student* 120/28/8.—I have established contact with the Editor of **PUNCH**. The item was accepted for Charivaria and is a good start. *Student* 591/28/7.—I am sure you will be pleased to know that my article submitted for my Second Lesson was published in the **DAILY MIRROR** and I received 6 guineas for same. *Student* 848/129.—I hope you will be as pleased as I am that my article, submitted for Test Paper Two, has been sold, on your advice, to **MEN ONLY**. *Student* 1954/157.—I have just corrected a proof of my story for **WIDE WORLD**—they have since accepted another and I have sent in a third. *Student* 778/2119.—I thought it might interest you to know that **THE COUNTRYMAN** has accepted a short article of mine on an old country custom. *Student* 820/1310.—I had 7 guineas for my story, which appeared in **WOMAN'S COMPANION**; I also had an article published recently in **FARMER AND STOCKBREEDER**. *Student* 4135/7150.—I have sold an article to the **COVENTRY EVENING TELEGRAPH**—they are sending me a cheque for 5 guineas. *Student* 184/315.—As you suggested, I submitted the article to the **NEW STATESMAN**. One was published on July 17. *Student* 1404/6/5/49.—I am pleased to tell you that the article which I wrote for Test Paper Two and submitted on your recommendation, to **CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER**, was accepted. *Student* 988/226.—The magazine which accepted my story was **RED STAR WEEKLY**—they paid me 4 guineas. *Student* 1173/58.—The article has been accepted by **LONDON OPINION**, having earned 4 guineas. *Student* 1813/173.—My story was published in the June issue of **ARGOSY** and I have just had a letter from the Editor offering me 8 guineas for a second one. *Student* 187/43.—I have sold my first short story prepared for Lesson Eight, to **HOME NOTES** for 12 guineas. *Student* 1905/1387.—I have had an article, about 2,000 words, published by the **WEST SUSSEX GAZETTE**.

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Time and time again Mrs Edwards drew cameraman George Barclay's attention to her Rinso results. "See", she would say excitedly, "just look at these! Results like these make me feel really proud—and I think my pride's justified."

"It certainly was", says Barclay who had been photographing attractive Mrs Edwards in her cosy Walthamstow flat on a busy washday. Mrs Edwards, like many other housewives Barclay saw, insisted that only Rinso was good enough for her!

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"You can do what you like," Louise said harshly. "I'll never divorce you. Never." Charles moved towards her, the blood pounding in his head

*Beginning this week—a gripping new novel of suspense*

# DEATH AND THE SKY ABOVE

*by ANDREW CARVE*

ILLUSTRATED BY FRED LAURENT

It was half-past nine in the morning when the ringing of her bedside telephone roused Louise Hilary from her doped sleep. She resisted the summons as long as she could; then, as the ringing went on, she groped for the ivory receiver and dragged it on to her pillow.

"Who is it?" she mumbled.

"Hallo, Louise. It's Charles."

"Oh!"

For a second or two there was a hostile pause. Then she asked: "What do *you* want?"

"Haven't you read my letter?"

"What letter?"

"I posted it last night—you must have had it by now."

"Well, I haven't. It's probably on the mat."

"Then please get it and read it. Louise, I've got to see you. Can I call this afternoon?"

Her face puckered as she tried to remember what day of the week it was. Thursday?—no, Friday.

"It's no good," she said. "I'm going away today—I'll be packing this afternoon."

"Then I shall have to come this morning. It's absolutely vital that I see you. How about twelve noon?"

"Oh, all right—if you must." She dropped the receiver back on its rest, mentally cursing her husband.

Pushing aside the rumpled sheets, she

emerged naked from the bed and thirstily gulped water from a large tumbler. She always felt dehydrated in the mornings.

She picked up a flimsy silk dressing gown from the floor and stood for a moment gazing at herself in the long mirror. Her face, smudged with yesterday's make-up, was a ruin. Her eyes were bloodshot at the corners, her cheeks gaunt. She could feel a tremor in her tongue, and her hands were shaky. I'm becoming a hag, she thought, worse every day. But at least her figure was all right—a bit on the thin side, perhaps, but pretty good for a woman of forty. Not, of course, that Max knew she was forty.

She frowned as she thought of Max Raczinsky, with his stupid demands and threats. What a bore these jealous types were! It wasn't even as though he had any right to be possessive—he had absolutely nothing to offer. No money to speak of, not even a flat of his own. And really, she couldn't be blamed for getting fed up with those risky and unsatisfactory hotel weekends. Now with Gerald it was going to be quite a different matter—a substantial income and a convenient apartment in a big, impersonal block made an ideal combination. They'd be able to have lots of fun when he got back from Canada.

MEANWHILE, the sooner she left London the better—she hadn't liked that look in Max's eyes. Probably he hadn't meant what he'd said, but you could never be sure with Poles. She must remember to ring up about her ticket.

She wrapped the dressing gown round her and pushed her feet into mules and went down to get the letter.

Charles had been so pressing that she felt some curiosity about its contents. But when she spread the four closely written sheets out on her pillow, sprawling full length with a cigarette smouldering between her lips, she found that it was the same old story. The only new thing was a note of desperation, which was very satisfying. He was obviously in a pretty bad state or he'd never have courted the humiliation of another meeting with her after what had happened before. "My last appeal to you. . . !" She smiled sourly. Not it! He'd go on asking—what else could he do? And she'd go on refusing. The thought of his impending visit gave her vindictive pleasure.

Her head still felt as though it were filled with damp blotting paper and she took a benzedrine tablet to wake herself up. That was routine, like the luminal at night. She ran a bath and lay in it for twenty minutes, the warm water soothing her inflamed nerves. Then she went down to the kitchen, still in dressing gown and mules, and made coffee. She drank it strong, glancing through the newspaper and chain-smoking. She ate nothing—she was never hungry in the mornings.

Before dressing, she made a perfunctory attempt to clear up some of the previous day's disorder.

It was a luxurious maisonette that Charles had provided for her, and expensively furnished, but she never bothered about keeping it decent. She had always regarded it as a bribe that hadn't come off, and the sight of it looking tatty didn't worry her. In a perverse sort of way, it even pleased her. She gathered the

**The woman walked quickly along the line of men, and stopped opposite Hilary. "That's the man," she said. Charles stiffened in horror**

cushions from the floor in the sitting-room, scraping at a bit of burnt carpet with her nail; emptied the lipsticked butts from the brimming ashtray, and removed a wet glass from the polished top of the new television set.

The smell of last night's dregs was enough to set her off. Crossing to the bottle of Trinidad rum on the tray, she poured out a third of a tumbler, added a splash of ginger ale, and took a long drink. Her day had begun.

CHARLES HILARY parked his car on the leafy side of the Kensington street, out of the blazing August sun, and approached the mews with a long, purposeful stride. He was a tall, slim man, bare-headed and youthful-looking, with a lean, thoughtful face permanently tanned by twenty years in the sub-tropics. Though the door of No. 1 had been left open for him, he knocked as any stranger would have done and waited for his wife's invitation before entering.

Apart from a momentary glimpse he had had of her one lunchtime in Piccadilly, when she had been getting into a taxi with a man, he hadn't set eyes on her for nearly five months, and the shock of her appearance stopped him, on the threshold of the sitting-room, like a blow. For a moment he forgot what she was doing to his life, and gazed at her in pity.

"When you've finished staring. . . !" she said irritably. She didn't trouble to move. She was lounging on the settee in a well-cut but crumpled black suit, with a magazine on her lap and an empty tumbler beside her. The air was heavy with perfume and the sickly smell of rum.

"I'm sorry. How are you, Louise?"

"As though you cared!" She put the magazine aside. As always, everything about him jarred on her—his good looks, his quiet manner, his healthy, out-of-doors appearance, his pretended concern for her. But today, she observed with satisfaction, there was more than a hint of strain about him, of nerves near breaking point.

"Have a drink," she said. "You're going to need it."

"Not just now, thanks."

"Well, get me one."

"Look, Louise—"

"No drink, no talk. Please yourself."

He sighed, and turned to the tray. "What is it—the usual?"

"The usual." Louise smiled maliciously. "Remember introducing me to it in Port of Spain? 'It's a pretty good drink,' you said."

"I couldn't know you were going to make it your boon companion." Charles picked up the bottle of rum, poured out two fingers of the pale, amber liquid, added a little ginger ale, and passed the glass to her. Louise took it and drank and set it down.

"Well?" she said.

"By now you've read my letter, I hope?"

"I've glanced through it."

Charles controlled himself with difficulty. "Did you gather enough of the contents to form a view about it," he asked, "or must I go over the ground again?"

"If you want to grovel, grovel by all means, but it won't make a scrap of difference. I shall never divorce you—you can make up your mind to that. You'll be my husband till death us do part!"

The gloating finality of her tone shocked him. She had always said she wouldn't divorce him, but this malevolent glee was something new. If she felt like that about it, there really seemed no point in going on. Half-heartedly, he played the only card that might have value.

"You'd be better off financially."

"I do quite nicely, thanks." She got up and re-charged her glass and sat down again. "You couldn't buy a divorce from me if you were Rockefeller."

"You may not continue to do nicely if there's no divorce. I could stop your allowance."

"Nonsense! I'd sue you."

"Have some sense, Louise. You wouldn't be able to live like this on a court order."

"And you wouldn't let it go to court—you're much too sensitive a plant. You'd hate the nasty publicity, wouldn't you? Anyway, you're not the only man in the world. I'd get by—don't worry."

"Aren't you taking rather a chance? As you say, there are other men. I may be able to divorce *you*, in time. Then where would you be?"

"You'd have to find the men first."

"I don't suppose that would be difficult."

"That's just where you're wrong. I don't believe in taking risks. It's a nuisance sometimes, having to be so careful, but it's worth it. No, you'll never free yourself that way."

HE looked at her, baffled. "Louise," he said, "I wish I could understand your attitude. It isn't as though you care for me. . . ."

"Care for you? I loathe the sight of you."

"Then you're keeping us tied together out of sheer spite?"

"How right you are! A bitch in the manger. That's the way it is, and that's the way it's going to be."

Charles sat staring at the floor. The gap between them was too wide to be bridged. He knew it was useless to speak, but his sense of justice revolted all the time.

"All right," he said at last, in as matter-of-fact a voice as he could manage, "you loathe me, and you want to punish me for—for making you what you are, I suppose. But, Louise, I'm not the only one involved. There's Kathryn. She's done you no harm—she's taken nothing you wanted. Can't you be generous to her?"

"Why should I? I *hate* her."

He stared at her in astonishment. "How can you say that? You've never met her—you've never even seen her."

"Oh, yes, I have." She glanced across at the television set. "I've watched her—often. I could kill her."

FOLLOWING the direction of her gaze, Charles suddenly understood what it was that had warped her mind and filled her heart with such bitter and implacable hatred. He had a mental picture of the room in darkness and the screen lit up and Louise sitting alone in a haze of rum and self-pity, a physical and moral wreck, watching the other woman who was young, and vital, and charming, and happy as she herself would never be again. *Look here, upon this picture, and on this.* . . . Knowing herself inferior in all respects but one—power—power to harm!

"Yes, I see," he said slowly. "That's—pretty horrible."

"You were always *so* understanding," she sneered.

"All the same," he said, "it's not getting you anywhere. It isn't making you happy to stand in her way. Can't you realize how terribly hard it is on her?"

"It's been hard on me. I can't see what *she's* got to whine about. . . . But you can do what you like. I'll never divorce you—never. If she's so set on you, let her live with you and raise a brood of bastards. . . ."

"Louise! Don't dare to talk like that!" He took a step towards her, his hands clenched. The blood pounded in his head.

She gave him a jeering smile. "You'd like to hit me, wouldn't you? Such an active man—but hardly a man of action, eh, Charles? You prefer to write letters, don't you? You prefer to beg. Why don't you go down on your knees and plead for your popsy? Go on—crawl! I like it." She reached for her glass and drained it and lay back, mocking him. "The dirty little slut!"

For a second time he almost lost control. He had never in his life felt towards anyone as he did at that moment towards her. He stood looking down at the spiteful, ravaged face, the stringy throat. . . .

Then he turned away from her, shutting out the sight.

He strode out of the room and across the narrow hall and out through the open front door without a word. He was trembling with anger. What a fool he'd been to come!

On days when he happened to be in the West End and Kathryn couldn't meet him, he usually lunched at his club, the Colonial Services, where he had several good friends. Mechanically, he

**ANDREW GARVE** is the pseudonym of Paul Winterton, brilliant ex-foreign correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, who wrote his first novel in Moscow at the end of the last war. The Russians were starving him of news and cutting his dispatches to ribbons. Bored and frustrated, he began writing a thriller to while away the time.

In 1947, the pastime became a career when he gave up newspaper work to become a full-time thriller writer. *Death And The Sky Above*, his tenth novel, is his first to be serialized in JOHN BULL.

Winterton is married, with four children, and lives at Rotherfield, Sussex, where he works in a caravan at the bottom of the garden. He is now busy on his next book, *A Tent On Samson*, set in the Scilly Isles.

"We'll go to France," she said. "Oh Charles, it's going to be so wonderful!" He took her face in his hands. "I love you, Kathryn," he said. "I hope I'll make you very happy"

drove in that direction now, but as he approached Pall Mall he knew that the last thing he wanted to do was to talk to anyone. Instead of going to the club, therefore, he parked the car and walked through to Duncannon Street, where there was a pub he liked. He ordered a sandwich and a pint of mild-and-bitter and retired to a corner to cool off.

He still felt shaken by the violence of his rage, and the impulse which he had so narrowly mastered. This business must be getting him down more than he'd realized. It would have been easier if he could have seen Kathryn at once and told her what had happened, but she was out on a job and wouldn't be free until the early evening. Meanwhile, he had to kill time.

He could go back to his flat and get on with his work, of course. He was writing a report on a subject which he found absorbing—smallholdings in Trinidad. But today he had no heart for it. He lit his pipe and considered various ways of passing the time.

He was still debating when a newspaper headline caught his eye. "England All Out," it said. Now that was an idea—he could go to the Oval. It was years since he had watched any first-class cricket, and he had heard that there were one or two spectacular batsmen in the Indian team.

He finished his beer and walked slowly back to his car. Now that cricket was decided on, he became preoccupied again with the fundamental problem of what he and Kathryn were going to do. Kathryn, of course, would say that Louise had settled the matter for them and that they must go ahead with their plans. It would be hard to resist her—and harder still to resist his own deep longing.

It was just after two o'clock when he reached the Oval. All the stands were full—the Test match and the fine day combined had drawn a huge crowd. He paid his five shillings at the turnstile and edged his way round the field.

The cricket proved disappointingly dull. Runs were coming at an incredibly slow rate, and there was an air of lethargy about the game. Perhaps the heat was responsible. For a while he made an effort to follow the play, but gradually his attention wandered and his thoughts turned inwards again.

He glanced apathetically at his score card as the fall of a wicket brought a stir of interest among the spectators. He had only the vaguest idea of what had been going on, and suddenly it seemed rather absurd that he should be standing here in the blazing sun when he couldn't keep his mind on the game for two consecutive minutes. He'd be better off at home—it would be hours yet before he could see Kathryn.

He waited until the new batsman was settled in, but when the play showed no sign of picking up he decided to call it a day and threaded his way back through the anonymous throng to the exit.

KATHRYN FORRESTER was saying: "In fact, Sir John, we need many more policemen. That's the answer, isn't it?"

She was sitting in a deck-chair on the lawn outside Sir John Fawcett's country home, thoughtfully turning the pages of the book of reminiscences which was to be the basis of her forthcoming television interview with the retired commissioner of police.

"That's it," he agreed. "And if the public want law and order to be maintained they've got to make police conditions sufficiently attractive to bring in enough of the right sort of men."

"Well, that should be a good note to end on." Kathryn turned the book sideways and examined one of the photographs. "You know, I'm wondering if it mightn't be a good idea to break up our conversation with actual film shots of some of the things we'll be talking about. For instance, the police and the miners playing football together during the General Strike. . . ."

"That would be splendid. Would you be able to get hold of the film?"

"I expect it could be managed. We've quite a collection of old cinema newsreels in the film library. I'll see what I can find." She picked up her bag and gloves.

"Won't you have another cup of tea before you go?" Fawcett sounded genuinely reluctant to let her leave. The fact was that he had taken a great liking to this efficient young woman with the piquant face and the warm brown eyes.

"No more, thank you, Sir John—I really must get back to the studio. I'll see you on Wednesday, then, for rehearsal."

Fawcett strolled with her across the lawn and opened the door of her car. "It's been delightful to meet you, Miss Forrester. I've seen you on television so often that I felt I knew you before you came, but a picture is never quite as good as the real thing, is it?"

She laughed. "That rather depends on the real thing. Goodbye, Sir John." She gave him a friendly wave and shot quickly away down the broad gravel drive.

Kathryn was fortunate in having found a

*Continued on page 28*

*TEN YEARS AFTER . . . by Captain B. H. Liddell Hart*

# WE MISS THE BUS ON THE ROAD TO ROME

**Mussolini's sudden downfall put the *Wehrmacht* on the spot. Liddell Hart's talks with the German generals reveal how they double-crossed their troublesome allies—and robbed us of quick victory**

"NOTHING SUCCEEDS like success" is a very well-known saying, based on an old French proverb. But it often proves true, in a deeper sense, that nothing succeeds like failure. Religious and political movements which reigning authority crushed have frequently been revived and come out on top in the long run after their leaders gained the halo of martyrdom. Conquering generals have been eclipsed by the conquered; that is shown by the immortal fame of Hannibal and Napoleon. Rommel is the latest example.

In the history of nations the same effect can be seen, though in a subtler way. A failure to gain immediate success has at times turned out very advantageously by helping towards fuller success and making final success more sure. That happened twice, most strikingly, in the Mediterranean campaigns of the second World War.

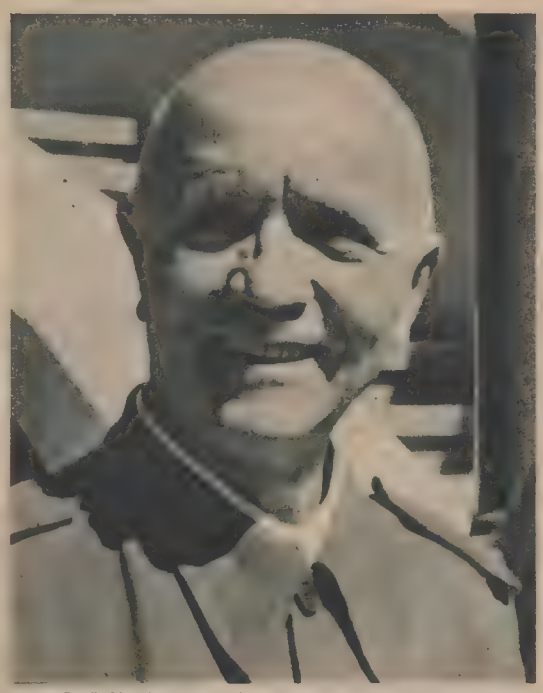
The frustration of the Allies' original advance on Tunis from Algiers in November, 1942, encouraged Hitler and Mussolini to send a stream of reinforcements there, across the sea, where the Allies were eventually able to trap them six months later and bag 250,000 prisoners—thus removing the chief obstacle to the Allies' own cross-sea jump from Africa into Europe.

The second case of a miscarriage turning out well was the invasion of Italy itself. After the swift capture of Sicily and the downfall of Mussolini, the second and shorter jump into Italy had looked a comparatively easy matter. The prospects were all the brighter because Italy's surrender had been secretly arranged, unknown to the Germans, and was timed for announcement simultaneously with the main Allied landing. At that moment there were only six weak German divisions in the south of Italy, and two near Rome, to cope with the double burden of meeting the Allied invasion and at the same time holding down their own ex-allies.

## Hitler Put His Spoke In

Field-Marshal Kesselring, however, managed to keep the invaders in check while disarming the Italians, and then brought the Allied armies to a standstill on a line a hundred miles short of Rome. Eight months passed before the Allies succeeded in reaching the Italian capital.

Yet that long postponement of the end that had seemed so close in September, 1943, carried big compensations for the Allied prospects in general. Hitler had at first intended to extricate his forces from Southern Italy, and establish a mountain blocking-line in the north. But Kesselring's unexpectedly successful defence induced Hitler, contrary to Rommel's advice, to pour resources southward with the aim of holding as much of Italy as possible, and for as long as possible. That decision was taken at the expense of the resources which Hitler soon needed to meet the more dangerous menace of the two-sided advance on Germany by the Russians from the east and by the Western Allies from Normandy. Relatively to its own strength, the Allied force in Italy absorbed a higher proportion of the Germans' resources than those on other fronts.



**Marshal Badoglio after the Italian surrender. Allied delay in exploiting his *coup d'état* enabled the Germans to regain the initiative**

Even so, it should be realized that great expeditions are not launched in the hope of reaching a frustration that may ultimately become profitable. So it is worth while to explore what happened in the way it did.

The first important factor in the Allies' frustration was their delay in exploiting the opportunity offered by the anti-war *coup d'état* in Italy which overthrew Mussolini. This took place on July 25, yet more than six weeks passed before the Allies moved into Italy. The causes of delay were both military and political.

At the conference of the Anglo-American service chiefs in Washington at the end of May, the Americans had opposed the idea of going on from Sicily to Italy, lest such a step might interfere with the plans for invading Normandy and defeating the Japanese in the Pacific. It was not until July 20, when the Italian forces in Sicily had shown their eagerness to surrender, that the American Chief of Staff agreed to a follow-up advance into Italy. But that was too late for making ready an immediate follow-up.

The political demand for unconditional surrender, formulated by Roosevelt and Churchill at Casablanca, was also a hindrance. The new Italian Government under Marshal Badoglio was naturally anxious to see if more favourable conditions could be obtained in negotiation with the Allied Governments, but found that it was difficult to get in touch with them.

The British and American Ministers at the Vatican were an obvious channel, and easily accessible, but proved useless owing to an extraordinary double case of official short-sightedness, as Badoglio's account reveals. "The British Minister informed us that unfortunately his secret code was very old and almost certainly known to the Germans, and that he could not advise us to use it for a secret communication to his government. The American Chargé d'Affairs replied that he had not got a code."

So the Italians had to wait until, in mid-August, they found a plausible pretext for sending an envoy on a visit to Portugal, where he could meet British and American representatives.

## Rommel's Midnight Summons

Hitler, by contrast, had wasted no time in taking steps to counter the likelihood that the new Italian Government would seek peace and abandon the alliance with Germany. On July 25, the day of the *coup d'état* in Rome, Rommel had arrived in Greece to take command there, but just before midnight he received a telephone call telling him that Mussolini had been deposed, and that he was to fly back at once to Hitler's headquarters in East Prussia. Arriving there at noon next day he "received orders to assemble troops in the Alps and prepare a possible entry into Italy."

The entry soon began under the excuse of safeguarding the supply routes into Italy against sabotage, or paratroop attack. The Italians protested, but hesitated to open fire and precipitate a conflict with their allies. So, by the beginning of September, eight German divisions under Rommel were established inside Italy's Alpine frontier-wall as a potential support or reinforcement to Kesselring's forces in the south. Moreover, the 2nd Parachute Division, a particularly tough force, was flown from France to Ostia, close to Rome. General Student, the Commander-in-Chief of the German airborne forces, went with it and, with the help of the Third Panzer Grenadier Division, was ordered to stand ready to disarm the Italian forces around Rome.

The presence of these divisions nullified the Allies' plan to drop one of their own airborne divisions, the 82nd American under Ridgway, on Rome itself to support the Italians in holding the capital. Even so, Student's allotted task looked a very tough one—before the event. Marshal Badoglio had kept five Italian divisions concentrated in the Rome area, despite the Germans' efforts to persuade him to send some of these divisions to defend the coast in the south. Unless and until they could be disarmed, Kesselring

would be in the awkward situation of having to face the Anglo-American invading armies with a third hostile army already lying astride his line of supply and retreat.

On September 3, the invasion was opened by Montgomery's Eighth Army crossing the narrow Straits of Messina from Sicily, and landing on the toe of Italy. That same day the Italian representatives secretly signed the armistice treaty with the Allies. But it was arranged that the fact should be kept quiet until the Allies made their second and principal landing—which was to take place at Salerno, south of Naples.

At midnight on September 8 the Anglo-American Fifth Army under General Mark Clark began to disembark in the Gulf at Salerno, a few hours after the B.B.C. had broadcast the official announcement of Italy's capitulation. The Italian leaders had not been expecting this to come so soon. Badoglio complained, with some justification, that he was unready to co-operate.

The Germans were also taken by surprise, but their action in Rome was prompt and decisive, despite the simultaneous emergency in the south produced by the landing at Salerno.

### With Tears In His Eyes

The outcome might well have been different if Italian action had matched Italian acting, which had gone a long way to conceal intentions and lull Kesselring's suspicions during the preceding days. I got a piquant account from General Westphal, who was Kesselring's young and very able Chief of Staff.

"On September 7 the Italian Minister of Marine, Admiral Count de Courten, called on Field-Marshal Kesselring to inform him that the Italian fleet would put out on the eighth or ninth from Spezia to seek battle with the British fleet. The Italian fleet would conquer or perish, he said, with tears in his eyes. He then described in detail its intended plan of battle."

These solemn assurances made a convincing impression. The next afternoon, Westphal and another general drove to the headquarters of the Italian army at Monterotondo. "Our reception by General Roatta was very cordial. He discussed with me in detail the further joint conduct of operations by the Italian seventh and German tenth armies in Southern Italy. While we were talking, a telephone message came through from Colonel von Waldenburg with the news of the broadcast announcement of the Italian capitulation. General Roatta assured us that it was merely a bad propaganda manoeuvre. The joint struggle, he said, would be continued as arranged between us."

Westphal was not altogether convinced by these assurances, and when he got back to his headquarters he found that Kesselring had already signalled to all commands the codeword "Axis"—the signal which meant that Italy had quitted the Axis and that action must be taken to disarm the Italians immediately.

### Air Swoop On Headquarters

In the Rome area, where the potential odds against him were heavy, Student used shock tactics. "I made an attempt to seize the Italian General Headquarters by dropping on it from the air," he told me when I interrogated him after the war. "This was only a partial success. While thirty generals and one hundred and fifty other officers were captured in one part of the headquarters, another part held out. The Chief of the General Staff had got away, following Badoglio and the King, the night before."

This vigorous German reaction to the armistice announcement so shook the Italian commanders that, instead of trying to overcome Student's couple of divisions, they hastened to withdraw out of reach, falling back to Tivoli with their forces, and leaving their capital in the hands of the Germans. That also cleared the way for negotiations, in which Kesselring applied a more gentle form of persuasion, proposing that if the Italian troops laid down their arms they should be allowed to go back to their homes immediately.

The results can be related in Westphal's words: "The situation around Rome calmed down completely when the commander of the Italian forces accepted in its entirety the German capitulation suggestion. Through the capitulation it was now possible to resume the wireless signals link with O.K.W. [the German Supreme Command] which had been broken off since the eighth. It was also possible to move immediately reinforcements by road from the Rome area to the Tenth Army in the south."

### Kesselring's "Doomed" Army

Until then, Hitler and his military advisers at O.K.W. had privately regarded Kesselring's army as doomed. Westphal told me of this, adding: "Field-Marshal Kesselring likewise took a sombre view of the situation. But in his view it was still capable of being mastered in certain circumstances—the farther south that the expected large-scale landing took place, the better the chances would be."

Kesselring himself put the matter in a nutshell, saying: "An air landing on Rome and sea landing nearby, instead of at Salerno, would have automatically caused us to evacuate all the southern half of Italy."

Fortunately for Kesselring's chances, the main Allied landing came where he had expected it, and where he could most conveniently concentrate his scanty forces to meet it. The Eighth Army's advance up the toe of Italy also ran according to expectation, and was too remote to carry an immediate danger to him. He benefited much from the Allied commanders' reluctance to venture outside the limits of air cover—and in his calculations was able to reckon on their consistency in observing such conventional limitations. As a result the Allied landing at Salerno suffered a costly check. Only by a narrow margin did the landing force hold off the German counter-attack and avoid being driven back into the sea.

In some Allied quarters it was argued that a landing on the heel of Italy, in the area of Taranto and Brindisi, would be "the line of least expectation"—while entailing little risk and promising the early possession of two fine ports. Such a landing was added to the plan at the last moment, as a subsidiary move, but the Taranto force consisted only of the British 1st Airborne Division, which was hurriedly collected from rest-camps in Tunisia, and rushed across in such naval vessels as were available at short notice. It met no opposition—but arrived without any tanks, and with scarcely any artillery or motor transport.

### Foresaw Allies' Next Move

In discussion I found that both Kesselring and Westphal considered that the Allied High Command's habit of limiting the scope of its strokes to the limits of constant air-cover had been the defenders' salvation, by simplifying the multiple problems of the defence.

Kesselring remarked: "The Allied plans showed throughout that the Allied High Command's dominating thought was to make sure of success, a thought that led it to use orthodox methods and material. As a result it was almost always possible for me, despite inadequate means of reconnaissance and scanty reports, to foresee the Allies' next strategic or tactical move—and thus to take the appropriate counter-measures so far as my resources allowed."

As to the course that the Allies should have taken, Westphal expressed this view to me: "If the forces employed in the landing at Salerno had been used instead at Civitavecchia [thirty miles north of Rome] the results would have been much more decisive. There were only two German divisions in Rome, and no others could have been brought up quickly enough to defend it. In conjunction with the five Italian divisions stationed at Rome, a combined sea and air landing by the Allies would have taken the Italian capital inside seventy-two hours." THE END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# ALONG MY LINE

*by GILBERT HARDING*

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**September 26**

***In the same issue, there will be a wonderful surprise for all TV viewers. Details will be announced next week***

# El Dorado

*by* **DORIS LESSING**

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

**Gold . . . it had estranged her husband, almost ruined the farm. Paul was her only hope now—for Dan had caught his father's obsession**

*CONCLUDING A TWO-PART STORY*

*Alec Barnes was a man with an obsession—gold. He had come to Rhodesia to farm; but now he was sinking mineshafts all over his fertile land. Maggie, his thrifty Scottish wife, hated them. He was squandering money which ought to be spent on educating their sons. Paul, aged sixteen, loved the farm and sided with his mother; but his younger brother, Dan, was intrigued by the gamble for gold.*

*It hurt Maggie to see Alec's gullibility: he was looking for gold with a metal divining rod now. Her cup of bitterness was full when he borrowed her wedding ring for divining—and lost it.*

*But one day, Alec struck a reef—a big one. He sent away some ore for analysis. After eleven days of unbearable waiting, a big government envelope arrived. White-faced, they watched Alec as his trembling fingers gashed it open. . . .*

MAGGIE HARDLY DARED to look at Alec as he drew the letter out of the envelope. He straightened the sheet and held it steady. Maggie kept her eyes on Dan and Paul. They were looking at each other with a sickly and ashamed smile. Unconsciously, they came to sit by their mother.

Alec held the piece of paper loose by one corner, and he was sitting rigid, his eyes dark and blank.

"No good," he said at last, in a difficult and jerking voice.

He seemed to have shrunk, the flesh of his face was tight on the bones, and his lips were blue. Suddenly he dropped the paper, and sat staring. Then he muttered: "I can't understand it I simply can't understand it!"

Maggie whispered to Paul. Both boys jumped up, relieved to get away, and went to the kitchen, and soon returned with a tray of tea. Maggie poured out a big cup, sugared it heavily, and handed it to Alec. He put it at his side, but she lifted it again, and held it in front of him, and he drank it off, rather impatiently.

It was that movement of impatience which reassured her. He was now sitting more easily, and his face was flushed. "I can't understand

"What are you doing on my land?" Paul demanded. Dan said nothing. "It's allowable to prospect," the miner said. But he was plainly uncomfortable

it," he said again, in an aggrieved voice, and Maggie understood the worst was over. She was aching with grief for him, and for the boys. They were embarrassed, pretending to read, and she could see how horribly the disappointment had gripped them. But they were only children, she thought; they would get over it.

"Let's all go to bed," she suggested brightly; but Alec looked through her.

"That means . . ." he began slowly; then he thought for a few moments, and repeated: "It means I was wrong over. . . . ."

He sat leaning forward, in heavy thought. Then he jumped up, strode through to his office, and returned with a divining wire. She saw it was one of the old ones, an iron wire.

"Have you anything gold about you?" he asked impatiently.

Maggie handed him a brooch her mother had given her. He took it and went towards the veranda.

"Alec," she protested, "not tonight. . . ."

But he was already outside. The children put down their books and looked at her, smiling ruefully. She smiled back. There was no need to say anything. She did not have to tell them they must forget the wild-goose daydreams. Life would seem flat and grey for a little, but not for long—that was what she intended to say to them, and they smiled obediently back, though she could see the shadow of bereavement in their eyes.

"Get yourself into your beds," she suggested again; but they shook their heads dumbly and handed their cups for more tea. They were looking out at the moonlight, where a black restless shape could be seen, passing backwards and forwards.

SHE went quietly to a window and looked out, shielding herself with a curtain, though she felt guilty at this anxious supervision, which Alec would most certainly resent. He did not notice, however. The moon shone monotonously down, a small bright silver coin, and his shadow jerked and lengthened over the rough ground as he walked up and down with his divining rod. From time to time, he stopped, and stood quite still, thinking. She went back to sit between the boys, and slipped an arm around each, and so they sat, thinking of their father outside.

Later, she went to the window again, and this time beckoned to Paul and Dan, and they stood with her, silently watching their father.

"He's a very brave man," she found herself saying in a half-choked voice. They felt awkward because of her emotion, and looked away when she insisted: "Your father's a very brave man, and don't you ever forget it, either of you!" She gave them a half-defiant, half-pleading look, and began to cry. This sent them off to bed, because they could not stand her emotion as well as their own.

Afterwards, she understood she should have remained calm and authoritative; she understood, too, that her pity for Alec was a false feeling—he did not need pity.

Until the moon went down, Alec remained pacing that patch of ground before the house. At last, he came to bed, morosely, but without that look of exposed and pitiful fear that she had learned to dread—he was safe in that orderly inner world he had built for himself. She heard him remark from the bed on the other side of the room, where he was sitting, smoking in the dark: "If that reef outside the front door is what I think it is, then I've found where I was wrong. Quite a silly little mistake, really."

Cautiously she asked: "Are you going on with that shaft?"

"I'll see in the morning. I'll just check up my new idea first."

They exchanged a few remarks of this kind, and then he crushed out his cigarette and lay down. He slept immediately, but she lay awake, wondering what she should do for Dan's future.

Maggie looked out of the window, sheltering guiltily behind a curtain. In the moonlight Alec was

In the morning, Alec went off to his shaft. Paul took himself down to interview the boss-boys about the farm work, and Dan and she remained alone together. She intended to talk to him at once; but his listless air decided her to wait a little. Several times he said scornfully, just as if he had not himself been just as intoxicated: "Father's crazy. He's got no sense left." He gave her a half-ashamed look and laughed.

She controlled her anger at this youthful unfairness. She was tired herself, and afraid of her own irritability, which these days seemed to explode in the middle of the most trifling conversation. To be irritable with Paul was allowable; he treated her tolerantly, like a grown man; but Dan was a different matter, and she waited a long time before she thought the opportunity had come. And the discussion went badly after all.

WHEN she insisted that he must study for the scholarship, he asked sullenly: "Why do you want us to be different, Mother? You and father were just like everybody else, but we've got to be something high and mighty."

Maggie already found herself growing angry. She said, as her mother might have done: "Everybody has the duty to better themselves and get on. If you try, you can be anything you like."

But the boy's face was set against her. There was something in the air of this country which had formed him, that made that other, older, voice seem ridiculous, like an anachronism.

Maggie persisted: "Your great-grandparents were small farmers; they rented their land from a lord. Your grandfather went to the city with nothing, and got his own shop, by working for it. Your father was just a clerk, really, and he took his opportunities, and made his way here. But you see no shame in accepting a job, wherever someone's kind enough to offer it to you."

Dan seemed embarrassed, and finally remarked: "I don't see it. My father is a small farmer, that's all, just like his grandparents. I don't see what's so new about that."

At this, as if his words had released a spring marked "anger," she snapped out: "So if that's what you are, and the way you look at things, then it's a waste of time even. . . ." She checked herself, but it was too late. Her loss of self-control had ended the contact between them.

Afterwards, she wondered privately if perhaps he was right. The wheel had come full circle, in a way.

The difference between that old Scotsman and Alec was that one worked his land with his own hands, bound only to his own energy and capacities, while the other worked through a large labour-force—he was a slave to his ill-fed, unproductive and sullen servants.

She never talked about it with Dan again, but he brooded over it, and discussed the problem, not with his father, or with Paul, but

pacing restlessly up and down, holding an old divining rod. He was like a man in a dream

with the Ericson brothers at the neighbouring gold mine. Or rather, with James, the elder brother, who had become a real friend to him.

James's younger brother Fred had married and built himself a separate house, and there was a new current of ill-feeling because James and his brother's wife disliked each other. So James stayed in the old house, living like a bachelor, with a native woman to care for him, and would not agree to share a home with the married couple.

THERE was considerable "feeling" which took the form of perpetual pinpricks. Fred's wife, seeing Dan call frequently on James, tried to woo him away. She asked him to meals and treated him as a grown-up, and sometimes reproached him gaily, saying: "Why don't you like me any more? You're deserting me, are you?" Dan resented her tactics, hating to be drawn into the dispute. He wanted to be able to visit at both houses without talk of "desertion."

James, without knowing it, was becoming the most important influence in Dan's young life. Dan found in him the toughness and leadership which his father lacked. Strength—that was the impression James gave, and that was what Dan needed in a friend; and yet there was also a hesitancy, just a moment of indecision before he moved, or spoke; and a heavily sardonic note in his drawl—strength on the defensive, watchful and perhaps precarious.

James smoked heavily, rough cigarettes he rolled for himself between yellow-stained fingers, and regularly drank just a little too much. He would get blind drunk several times a year, but between these outbursts kept to his three whiskies at sundown. He would toss these back, standing, one after another, when he came in from work, and then give the bottle a long look, almost malevolent, and put it irritably away. Then he took his dinner, without pleasure, to feed the drink, and immediately went off to bed.

One weekend Dan found him lying sodden with drink, asleep, sprawled over the table, and he was sickened. But afterwards, James was simple and kindly, as always; nor did he apologize, but took it as a matter of course that a man needed to drink himself blind from time to time. This, rather oddly, reassured the boy. His own father never drank, and his mother had a Puritan horror of drink, though she would offer visitors a glass from politeness. It was a problem that had never touched him, and now it was presented to him, crudely, and seemed no problem at all.

He had taken to asking about James's life; until then, he had accepted him as a child does a grown-up. James would give him that shrewd, sardonic look, hesitate a little, and then, in a rather tired way, as if talking of his experience was an effort, answer the boy's clumsy questions.

James's mother was Afrikaans, and his father English. He had the practicality, the humour, the good sense, of his mother's people, and the tongue-tied poetry of the English, which expressed itself in angry fatalism, and perhaps also in the drink. He had been raised in a suburb of Johannesburg, and went early to the mines. He spoke of that city with a mixture of loathing and fascination, so that, to Dan, the country boy, it became an epitome of all the great and glamorous cities of the world.

But James also said, with satisfaction: "I got out of it in time—I had that much sense."

Dan asked what he meant, rather disappointedly. James said: "When you first go down, you get paid like a prince and the world's your oyster. Then you get married, and tie yourself up with a houseful of furniture on the hire-purchase and a house under mortgage. Your car's your own, and you exchange it for a new one every year.

"It's a hell of a life, money pouring in, and money pouring out, and your wife loves you, and everything's fine; parties and a good time for one and all. And then your best friend finds his chest is giving trouble, and goes to the doctor, and then, suddenly, you find he's dropped out of the crowd, he's on half the money, and all the bills to pay. His wife finds it no fun and goes off with someone else."

James gave a hoarse, wry laugh. "Then you find it's not just one, but half your friends are in just that position, crocks at thirty, and owning nothing but the car, and they've sold that to pay alimony. You find you're drinking too much; there's something on your mind, so to speak. Then, if you've got sense, you walk out while the walking's free. If not, you think: It can't happen to me. And you stay."

Dan thought this over and asked: "But you didn't have a wife?"

"Oh, yes. I had a wife all right," said James, grim and humorous. "I had a fine wife, but only while I stayed down the mines. And then, when I decided it wasn't good enough, and I wanted to save my lungs, she transferred to someone else. She left him, too, when his luck changed, and married a man on the surface. His lungs'll last him out, and so will she, provided the money does, too."

DAN was silent, because this bitter note against women was not confirmed by what he felt of his mother.

"Do you ever want to go back?" he asked at last.

"Sometimes," conceded James, grudgingly. "It's a good life. But when I get the hankering, I remember I'm still alive and kicking when my crowd's mostly dead or put out to grass."

He looked sharply at the boy and said: "Hey, sonny, if you've got ideas about going south to the golden city, then think again. If you want to mix yourself up in *that* racket, then you buy yourself an education and stay on the surface, bossing the others, and not underground, being bossed. You take it from me, son:"

Another time, Dan asked: "Are you glad you became a small-worker?"

There was a shrewd look from James, and the laconic reply: "No complaints. There's a living for the two of us, as long as the seam lasts."

This was not good enough for Dan, who was restless with the adolescent's demands for a full life. It seemed that James was cruelly refusing to meet his need, even wilfully refusing.

Dan tried again: "If you had your life again, how would you change it?"

James laughed and grimaced and said: "Who's offering me my life over again?"

The boy's face was strained with disappointment.

"I want to know," he said stubbornly, like a child.

"Listen, sonny," said James, after a pause, but quietly this time, "I'm no person to ask for advice. I've got nothing much to show. All I've got to pat myself on the back for is I had the sense to pull out of the mines in time to

*Continued on page 37*

# Bouquets by cable—through Cupid's courier

*by JESSICA YOUNG*

**Roses for a princess of unknown address, carnations for a girl living in the backwoods of Borneo—hustling Robert Fowler will deliver flowers to anyone, anywhere, day and night**

Robert Fowler and his daughter at London Airport. As the president of an international flowers-by-wire service with a £15 million turnover, his job takes him round the world

A YOUNG PETTY OFFICER in the Royal Navy walked into a florist's shop in the business quarter of Southampton one September morning in 1950 and asked for the proprietor. He then opened a daily newspaper, pointed out a photograph of a seventeen-year-old Continental princess who had come to England to finish her schooling, and gave an order for twenty-five roses—twenty-four red and one white—to be delivered to her every week. "He also asked me to write a suitably tender message with each consignment," recalls Robert Fowler, the florist. "It was quite a tall order."

An even greater snag was that nobody seemed to know exactly where the girl was, though her school was somewhere in Worcestershire. Fowler made several telephone calls, and next morning drove to the Midlands. He called on eleven florists and arranged for inquiries to be made at boarding schools throughout Worcestershire. Three weeks later, when Fowler was back in his shop, one of his "detectives" located the girl, and deliveries started.

### A Gardenia At Midnight

As co-ordinator and latterly as president of Interflora, an international flowers-by-wire service run on a non-profit-making basis for twenty thousand florist members all over the world, Fowler is used to odd assignments. To fulfil one order he had to charter a boat at Cowes so that he could deliver a gardenia at midnight to a girl on a yacht anchored off Spithead for the Naval Review. "We pride ourselves," Fowler explains, "that we can deliver flowers nearly anywhere in the world, day and night, without them having to travel more than a short distance."

Interflora has made flowers into an international big business. It carries out about twenty orders a minute, and has a world turnover of more than £15 million. Its two thousand members in Britain, who each pay an annual subscription of three guineas, have already this year handled a million orders worth about £1,000,000. Ten thousand Interflora florists are in the United States and eight thousand more are spread through the rest of the world.

They have an international currency of their own, a money-measure known as a fleurin. It is designed, Fowler explains, to help the florist in Accrington and Southend to translate fifteen shillingsworth of carnations into quantities represented by francs, marks, dollars and yen. All exchanges are handled by clearing-houses operating in London, Detroit and Zurich.

Fowler's work as co-ordinator takes him all over the world. He smooths out misunderstandings and disputes, seeks new contracts and persuades reluctant florists to join the organization. Recently he went to Australia, where there are some blank spots on his service

A customer writes a card for his floral gift. Flowers are usually sent for romantic reasons, but often senders, too shy to write a tender note, ask the florist to do it

An assistant packs a bouquet. "Ordinary folk with no money to burn provide most orders," says Fowler

map, and increased the association's delivery coverage. One florist who had several times refused invitations to co-operate was visited at his shop at Bassendean, near Perth, by Fowler. "I talked with him for half an hour," he says. "By then he was convinced it could be a good investment. Another gap was sealed."

Sometimes Fowler's claim that Interflora can deliver flowers to anyone almost anywhere is challenged. Sir Patrick Spens, M.P. for South Kensington, whose daughter is married to a planter in one of the remoter reaches of Borneo, one afternoon made a bet with Fowler that he could not get some carnations to her in time for her birthday the next day. Fowler made a quick check and found that there was no florist within a thousand miles of the plantation. He cabled an Interflora man in Singapore, however, and had the flowers specially flown to Borneo. They got there on time. "Unfortunately," Fowler admits, "we had to break our own rule about untravelled flowers."

A quick-thinking hustler of forty-seven, Fowler occasionally has to rely on the initiative of his contacts in far-away places to get his floral requests attended to. When a passenger was taken off a ship at Lagos with acute appendicitis some months ago, his wife in England ordered flowers to be sent to his bedside. "There was no Interflora agent in the town," says Fowler, "so we got one of the local inhabitants to cut some flowers from his own garden and take them along."

## Picked For Golden Wedding

On another occasion, Fowler was asked to see that a couple celebrating their golden wedding in a liner—three days out from Southampton—received a bunch of chrysanthemums. "It was a tough one," he recalls, "but I radioed a friend on board and got a reply from him saying that the order had been executed. It turned out that he had been round the tables in the main dining saloon, taking a few choice hot-house blooms here and there."

Flowers are sent by Interflora's customers for a variety of reasons, ranging from family sentiment to public adulation, but the majority have a background of romance. Often, the senders are too shy or in too great a hurry to write out accompanying tender messages, and prefer to leave this to the florist.

The risks in this side of his work are recognized by Fowler. "You have to know quite a bit of the background of the people you are dealing with in such cases," he explains. "It's so easy to do the wrong thing."

A New Yorker wanted a red rose delivered to his fiancée in England some weeks ago, but when Fowler got the order he found it was made out for twenty dollars. Instead of one rose he sent a bouquet to the full value. Soon afterwards he received a cable from the American, who was infuriated. "There had been some mistake in the cabling," Fowler says. "And I'd taken far too much for granted in sending a bouquet. It turned out that the single rose had a special significance, and I very nearly caused a broken engagement."

## Helped By Ships' Stewards

Working in an international seaport, Fowler is kept busy with orders from abroad. He has to be familiar with shipping movements, tides and docking arrangements, and makes a point of having contacts aboard all the ocean liners and most of the cargo ships using Southampton. Sometimes he has as many as a hundred orders for one load of passengers. Finding some of them would be impossible, he says, without the help of friends among ships' stewards.

Just before the liner America sailed on one recent trip, an order reached Fowler from the United States for a bowl of flowers to be delivered daily to cabin A30. He made up six bowls, labelled them and left them with a steward. As he was going ashore, later, after delivering other orders, he noticed a cabin-boy taking two of his bowls into A30. Fowler called him back, and the boy explained that he had already left two more there.

"I took a chance," Fowler recalls. "I dived into the cabin and grabbed them. But as I was coming out, A30's lady passenger appeared. She had quite a shock, but she didn't realize what was going on, and the flowers came as a surprise—as intended."

Fowler's delivery vans and cars all carry a large ball of string so that last-minute orders, of which there are many, can be hauled aboard even when vessels are on the move. The ball is thrown first and the flower-box, tied to the loose end, is then pulled aboard. It is a technique used by Fowler ever since he nearly failed to fulfil an order during the General Strike in 1926. On that occasion, the Majestic sailed an hour before her scheduled time. With a box of chrysanthemums to deliver, Fowler persuaded a dockside craneman to help. They hooked up the flowers and swung them aboard just in time.

Fowler's business was started in 1907 by his father who, sixteen years later, became one of the founder-members of Interflora. In the early days, even the florists who joined the organization doubted whether the service would have a wide appeal. "Well-to-do people certainly use us a lot," Fowler explains, "but most of our orders come from ordinary folk with no money to burn." It is now common practice to send flowers by wire not only for weddings and funerals, but also for birthdays, wedding anniversaries and on the birth of a baby. Every Naafi canteen is an Interflora agent, and Servicemen overseas have been sending flowers home regularly for years.

## Bouquet For The Wrong Woman

Sometimes Fowler has to present bouquets personally, to make sure they reach the right person. In the dining-room of a liner bound for Capetown he found an elderly woman whose name was the same as the one on an order form for an expensive bouquet. She seemed surprised when Fowler interrupted her breakfast and gave her the flowers. Fowler asked if she knew a man called Reg—the sender. The woman assured him she did. At that moment, however, a girl in her early twenties, wearing an engagement ring, came up and asked if the bouquet was hers.

"It soon turned out that it was," says Fowler. "But it wasn't the first time flowers have gone to someone with the same name as the person they are addressed to. Sometimes people won't admit that any mistake has been made, and they lay a firm claim to the flowers. Fortunately, the old lady was most reasonable about it." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

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*ABOVE US THE WAVES (7) by Charles Warren and James Benson*

# Four men count the minutes to chaos

**Only four men—the captured crew of midget submarine X6—knew of the disaster that faced the Tirpitz. For they had placed the charges that would blow the giant warship—and themselves—sky high**

SHORTLY AFTER SEVEN THIRTY on the morning of September 22, 1943, there was great and unusual activity aboard the German battleship Tirpitz, lying in the small, rock-bound opening called Kaafjord, in Norway's Arctic Circle. "Action stations" had sounded and steam was ordered; the ship was being hurriedly prepared for sea.

All watertight doors had already been closed. Forrard, on the vast fo'c'sle, the starboard cable was being heaved in, a manoeuvre which was making the battleship's bows veer slowly round. Amidships, two divers were getting into their suits as fast as they could, preparatory to going over the side. There was much shouting and running about, and orders and counter-orders followed each other in bewildering sequence. Over all, there was indiscriminate firing of both small arms and the ship's subsidiary armament.

Discipline was loosening under the tension of alarm, and alarm was not far from panic. The great 40,000-ton ship was threatened, but nobody aboard, from the captain downwards, could have said precisely what the menace was.

A little group of four young men standing under guard on the warship's deck could have given the necessary information. Dripping wet, unshaven, dressed anyhow in long sweaters and greasy blue trousers, they resembled the bedraggled survivors of some marine disaster. They felt intensely cold, and from time to time took generous tots of the hot coffee and schnapps tendered them by their guards. Occasionally they glanced surreptitiously at their watches.

In spite of their physical misery and the fact

**With a deafening report the charges exploded, lifting the great ship clean into the air. The four prisoners were hurled to the deck**

ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD OSMOND

that they had just been made prisoner, they were thoroughly enjoying the situation. It was for this that they had come more than a thousand miles and through as many dangers. For these men were the crew of His Majesty's midget submarine X6, and their scuttled craft lay at that moment under the ship they had come to destroy. Near it, beneath the Tirpitz's bows, were the two two-ton charges of amatol which had been released before the little craft was sent to the bottom. The charges had been timed to fire at 8.15 a.m.

### Divers Lowered Overboard

As Lieutenant Cameron, the X6's commander, looked at his watch for the tenth time, he asked himself the questions that were in the minds of his three companions—Sub-Lieutenants Lorimer and Kendall, and Engine-Room Artificer Goddard. Would the Germans succeed in taking the battleship sufficiently clear of her anchorage to minimize the effects of the explosions; and if not, what would those effects be? He watched the divers being lowered overboard; they would come up, he thought wryly, more quickly than they went down. It was going to be an anxious and exciting forty minutes wait. . . .

X6's charges were not the only ones threatening the Tirpitz. Unknown to Cameron and his men, Lieutenant Godfrey Place, commanding the midget X7, was at that moment trying to fight his way out through the anti-submarine nets surrounding the anchorage. Place, too, had been successful, having laid his charges under the battleship's "X" turret about the same time as X6 released hers. The Germans had given the alarm on sighting Cameron's craft, and Place, as he smashed beneath or went over the nets in an attempt to escape, was under hot and continuous fire.

Farther down Kaafjord, where the narrow entrance widened to become the southern extremity of the great channel of Alten Fjord, a third midget was making its run in. This was X5, commanded by Lieutenant Henty-Creer; his command was the last of the three midgets briefed to attack the Tirpitz, the most important target in the plan of "Operation Source."

Operation Source was the name given to one of the most daring and ambitious exploits of the sea war—the attempt to reach and sink three great units of the German fleet, Tirpitz, Scharnhorst and Lützow, in their heavily defended berths in the North Norwegian Skerries.

Six midgets, or X-craft as they were officially known, had set out from Scotland on September 11. Each was in tow of a "big" submarine; the force was expected to make the 1,200-mile journey to the Arctic Circle in eight days. They were to be released from their parent craft near the entrance to Alten Fjord, after which they had to negotiate the sixty miles of dangerous, mine-studded channels on their own.

Not all of them reached the fjord. On the night of the fifteenth, X9, in tow to the submarine Syrtis, broke away and was never heard of or seen again. Her target was to have been the Scharnhorst. Two days later the force was further depleted when X8, briefed to attack the Lützow, became unmanageable and had to be scuttled somewhere off the Lofoten Islands.

The second craft for the Scharnhorst, X10, had such serious mechanical difficulties during the run-in that her commander, Lieutenant Hudspeth, fearing that his efforts to reach the anchorages might jeopardize the chances of the others, decided against engaging. He took X10 to the bottom four and a half miles from the entrance to Kaafjord and attempted to repair his crippled craft.

### Nightmare For Captain Meyer

Hudspeth's misfortune, the approach of X5, and Godfrey Place's desperate attempts to get clear of the anchorage in X7 were, of course, unknown to Cameron and his crew as they waited on Tirpitz for the charges to explode. Although the prisoners had not yet been interrogated, it was clear that the Germans knew that some sort of underwater attack had been carried out. The divers had been sent over the side to examine the hull for limpet mines, but the fact that something heavier and more lethal was also feared is apparent from the ship's log, in which an entry refers to the preparations for sea as measures "to leave the net enclosure if possible before the time-fused mines detonate."

The measures being taken must have appeared painfully inadequate to the Germans. The ship was veering very slowly out to starboard, almost inch by inch. To the man most concerned, Captain Meyer, the battleship's commander, she could scarcely have appeared to be moving at all. The situation had a nightmare quality. Indeed, had it not been for the presence of the four prisoners standing on the deck and the lively firing of the ship's subsidiary armament at the escaping X7, the fact that the Tirpitz was in danger would hardly have been credible.

Snug in her cocoon of protective nets in the lee of high cliffs, the battleship must have felt herself impregnable in Kaafjord. She had been there for nine months, ever since her last raid on the Russian White Sea convoys. The channels which led to her hideout had been under continuous destroyer patrol; every approach was mined, the surrounding hills were packed with anti-aircraft batteries. She was sixty miles from the open sea, and more than a thousand from the nearest British base; no ship in the history of marine warfare could have been so inaccessible. Yet something had reached her. Captain Meyer, directing the frantic activity aboard, was a very puzzled and worried man as the hands of the clock jerked towards eight o'clock.

### Thunder Lodged In The Ship

At 8.10, with all his crew doing everything possible to lever the ship away from the still unknown danger, he ordered the interrogation to begin. Officers, accompanied by an interpreter, approached Cameron and his men. Two minutes later, at 8.12 precisely, as the first questions were being asked, the charges exploded and the great ship was lifted six feet clean into the air. An enormous column of water towered up on the port side and a deafening report, as if thunder itself lodged in the ship, split the already crepitating air. Every man stationed aft was hurled off his feet. The little party round the prisoners, and the prisoners themselves, were thrown to the deck.

John Lorimer's first feeling, as he went sprawling, was one of utter astonishment. He had had some idea of the force in the charges his craft had laid; he had never expected this savage convulsion. As he picked himself up he could not help thinking of the German divers below the hull. . . .

After the sick moment of surprise and dread

The crew of X6. Standing, left to right: Sub-Lieutenant Wilson (passage crew officer), Lieutenant Cameron (captain), Sub-Lieutenant Lorimer (first lieutenant). Sitting: Sub-Lieutenant Kendall (diver), Engine Room Artificer Goddard (helmsman), passage crew ratings McGregor and Oxley

Lieutenants Godfrey Place (left) and Donald Cameron on their liberation from prison camp. For gallantry on the Tirpitz raid each was awarded the V.C.

had passed, panic broke out in the Tirpitz. Just as a man beside himself with shock and fear will hit out at anything in sight, so the Germans, aboard and on shore, cut loose with everything that came to hand. The gun crews inboard opened up a brisk fire on their own tankers and small craft moored in the harbour. One gun position destroyed another with uncontrollable firing. The anti-aircraft batteries on the cliffs went into action. Up fjord, the destroyers and motor-boats, dashing about after X7 as she grappled with the nets, joined in the fusillade. For some minutes the surface of Kaafjord boiled with strife and detonation.

On board the battleship, meanwhile, the crew of X6 were being spared nothing of the general hullabaloo. Their German questioners, so polite and even respectful before the explosion, quite lost their heads. Once having picked themselves from the deck and felt for broken bones, they danced round the submariners in a sort of witches' circle. Pistols were waved, guttural threats were offered. How many midgets were employed? How many charges had been set? Where? At what depth? Why?

## Explosion Shook Midget Free

Cameron and his crew answered none of these questions. They were thinking of Godfrey Place and X7; of Henty-Creer and of X5. For the Tirpitz, although hard hit, was still afloat, and there was always hope that either Place or Henty-Creer might give her the *coup de grâce*.

Godfrey Place's charges had exploded simultaneously with those of X6; their force, driving through the water, had reached the X7 half a mile away as the midget struggled with the nets. The detonation shook the small boat free of the meshes and sent her to the surface. Under heavy fire at once, Place had just time to see that the battleship was still afloat before plunging again to the bottom. The danger there was as great as that above. The craft was jolted by depth-charges and, although structurally sound, suffered serious damage to depth gauges and control mechanism. Place doubted if he could keep his boat running much longer. He realized, then, that there was no way out, that he and his men would either be captured, or killed by the storm of fire on the surface. But there was satisfaction in knowing that he had done what he had come to do. What Place did not know at that time was that only he and one of his crew would live to tell of it.

## Run The Gauntlet Of Fire

Meanwhile, the lunatic firing from Tirpitz, which had been dying down with the return of some semblance of calm, broke out again with great violence at 8.45. This time there was a target. Five hundred yards outside the nets a midget had been sighted on the surface.

This was obviously Henty-Creer in X5. Alerted by the explosions, he must have courageously decided to run through the fire on the surface in a do-or-die attempt to get his charges under the ship. The gunners on the battleship claim to have hit and sunk his craft almost at once; as it disappeared, depth charges showered round its diving position. From the deck of Tirpitz the crew of X6 watched the massacre helplessly. They knew there could be little hope for their friends, and in fact neither craft nor crew was ever sighted again.

With the sinking of X5, the battle for the Tirpitz was over. In spite of the fact that the ship still lived, the record was impressive. Three midgets had approached after forcing the dangerous narrows of the fjords. Two had attacked with success; four men were alive.

These were joined at 9 a.m. by a fifth—Godfrey Place. Place, harried by depth charges, had finally brought his craft to the surface near a massive gunnery target in the middle of the channel. Hit and holed at once by accurate fire from the battleship, the midget sank immediately. Only Place, who had just opened the hatch, was able to jump from the casing to the target, from which he was taken a few minutes later by a German picket boat.

His arrival on Tirpitz was enthusiastically greeted by Cameron and his companions. Aggravated, no doubt, by Place's fantastic appearance, the Germans, with their ship reeling under them, took a sourer view. Paddling in a gigantic pair of fur-lined boots, shrouded in an interminable sweater which almost covered the long, submarine-issue pants that did service for trousers, the commander of X7, as he stood shivering under the guns of "Y" turret, was scarcely dressed in review order.

## Bitter Struggle For Life

He answered the interrogation distractedly. His thoughts were with the three members of his crew, at that moment still alive in the crippled shell of X7, 120 feet below the surface of the fjord. There, in the small steel cave of dying air, a bitter struggle for life was being enacted.

The plight of men trapped in a crippled submersible lying on the bottom under tremendous pressures of water is one of the most terrible

*Continued on page 41*

# The desperate mission of Su Mei

*by* ***MARK DERBY***

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

This child a secret agent? It seemed incredible. And yet she had been shot carrying a message. The doctor wondered just what that message was

RICHARD BROWN PEELED OFF his rubber gloves and stopped being a surgeon, because his job was done. He became a man again, and in the same moment the unconscious casualty on the operating table with the bullet wound in the back became . . . a woman? No, not a woman, but something more than a child. A child hesitating beautifully on the brink of womanhood.

The theatre sister dusted the small exit wound above the young right breast with penicillin and began doing an expert job with a many-tailed bandage, helped by a young Chinese nurse. She saw the surgeon's fine grey eyes on the unconscious face and said, "She's young—for this kind of thing."

He nodded, still gazing down at the perfection of honey-cream skin and oblique Chinese eyes and brows. "She was in the river when they shot her. She'd made it, all but a few yards." And he frowned, picturing the darkness and the cold Sham Chun River, which at that point formed the frontier between China and Hongkong; the cold river and the alarm sounding in the police post; the guards firing through the starlight and the girl dragging herself ashore into the shelter of the bamboo clump where a patrol of British soldiers had found her at dawn.

"Alone?" the sister asked.

"So far as we know."

The sister met his eyes a moment, then ordered the Chinese nurse to fetch her second pair of spectacles from her room. When the theatre door had closed she asked, "What about this?" and raised the unconscious left arm.

On the underside of the upper arm a small, tight roll wrapped in oiled silk had been attached by a cross of adhesive tape. "I was thinking maybe you'd better take care of this for the time being," she said.

The surgeon's brows went up. "An agent? At that age?" He sighed through his mask. But if not that, it must have been something equally desperate to drive her into such risk.

"I've nothing against Ah Yin," the sister said, nodding towards the door through which her assistant had vanished, "but I don't suppose all this child's enemies are on the other side of the border. There could be one in this hospital. . . ."

Richard Brown carried the tiny cylinder she handed him into the dressing-room and dropped it into his jacket pocket. When his mask was thrown aside, his whole face, which was an ordinary patient brown face except for a fineness about the eyes, was set in a frown of concern.

As soon as he'd changed back into his suit, he strolled out on to the terrace for a smoke. He stood there till the cigarette was finished, staring across at the blue hills of China, only a few miles away. Only a few miles away, but separated from that tiny Western outpost not only by a land frontier but by grim frontiers of ignorance, misunderstanding and hatred.

Over there, somewhere in that vast country with its ever-tragic history, was the home of the child Su Mei. That was the name she had given in her one interval of consciousness before the operation to probe and clean the ugly wound that would have killed in an hour if the bullet's path had been a centimetre lower. And Su Mei had left her home and risked death to enter this tiny British colony. To escape? To bring in the tiny secret object now in his pocket?

He wanted to know.

Sister Rosa organized the paper-boat races. Even as she lined them up, she knew which would win

FOR a moment he hesitated, breathing deeply the fragrance of the small garden after the sterile reek of the operating theatre. The fragrance came chiefly from the frail pink roses matron had spent so much time nursing; they were in bloom at last and their perfume was a dream of home. Then he took out the small cylinder, slipped off the oilskin wrapping and unrolled the contents.

It was a ribbon of scarlet silk, two inches wide and a yard long, embroidered in yellow with a long inscription in Chinese characters. Though he now spoke a little Chinese after his year's work in the colony, he could not read the script, and after a single glance he rolled it

**He tried to calm her, but her face was still tense and troubled and her eyes were imploring. "You must help me," she said. "It is important"**

up again, put it back in the oilskin bag and thrust it into the back of his pocket-book.

There was more work then and he forgot Su Mei and her secret until he met the theatre sister at the door of the men's surgical ward late in the afternoon.

"That child they shot last night," she said. "She's missed the thing she had strapped to her arm and now she's raising hell in the children's ward. Could you see her? She speaks quite good English, you'll find."

He went along to the sun-bright ward and found her bed. Eyes shaped like almond leaves stared up at him, fevered and desperate.

"Now what's the trouble?" he asked, in a tone his own daughter would have recognized.

"Are you the doctor who took out my bullet?" The English quite good, as the theatre sister had said, but with an odd little accent to it.

"The bullet took itself out," he told her. "It went right through. I only cleaned up the hole it made."

She said gravely, "Then I must thank you." And at once her voice and eyes sharpened. "But you stole from me. The fat nurse told me."

He took out his pocket-book. "I kept this safe for you." He handed over the tiny roll.

The fine, guileless eyes, steeply oblique, filled with tears. "I ask forgiveness," she said humbly, her whole body trembling in strong emotion. The little cylinder was already out of sight.

RICHARD BROWN sat on her cot with most of the children in the ward watching him attentively. Peace was what the poor child needed, peace and sleep. She must be led away from the emotions that had tied her in a tight knot.

He asked, experimentally, "I wonder where you learned to speak English so well?"

"From Sister Rosa," she said. And at once he sensed an easing of tension, almost as if Sister Rosa's name was a symbol of peace and confidence. "Sister Rosa taught us."

"Who? You and your sisters?"

"I haven't any sisters or brothers or father or mother," she said. "None of us at the orphanage had any. That was why the sisters looked after us."

"English sisters?"

"English and American and Italian. Sister Rosa was American, but she was born in Italy."

"And she taught you English?"

"When we were very little. She only taught the littlest ones. She wasn't one of the clever sisters. She just looked after us before we could do proper lessons and afterwards she taught us needlework."

It was working. With every word she was growing calmer.

"I think you were very fond of Sister Rosa," he said.

"Everybody was," she said simply. "Her name wasn't really Sister Rosa. It was a long Italian name, too difficult for us to say when we were small, and the Mother Superior called her Sister Rosa because she loved roses so much and that was easy so we all called her that."

"Do you get roses in China, then?" he asked.

She told him, "None in our province. But Sister Rosa had planted them all over the garden and one bush gave her many flowers, the one by the paper-boat bridge."

HE let her chatter on, only half-listening but keeping up his look of pleased attention. "We called it the paper-boat bridge because we started our paper boats just below it when we had races. The races were Sister Rosa's idea. She made the paper boats and painted a picture on each one, a fish or a lotus or a new moon or an eye. And there was always a piece

of crystallized ginger for the winner, or a paper hat or a picture with angels. And the one whose boat came in last got a chore to do, perhaps weeding a path or collecting all the toys."

She smiled for the first time.

"But, do you know, Sister Rosa always cheated!"

He was alert enough to look suitably shocked.

"And I was the only one who ever found out. It was like this. She always fixed it that the one whose boat won was somebody who'd been sad or disappointed, or maybe had a birthday that day. And the one who lost was nearly always one who'd been selfish or naughty."

She gave a small yawn and closed her eyes a moment.

"You see"—the young voice was drowsy—"by the bridge where we started our boats for the race there was a tiny island, only a big rock, really. And round one side of that rock the water was very strong and on the other side it was very weak. The boat that was launched close to the left side of the island always won and the boat that started on the right side of it nearly always came in last. You see? And it was always Sister Rosa who lined us up for the start so she could choose whoever she liked for the winning and losing starting points. That's how we lost when we'd been bad and won when we were sad, or on our birthdays. Sister Rosa loved birthdays."

After a second he realized it was his cue for a comment.

"It was sweet of her, wasn't it?" he said. She was smiling drowsily, all the tension gone. "And thank you for telling me. But now I must go and do some more work and you must go to sleep."

She asked, "Shall I be better tomorrow?"

"Much better, if you sleep. Look, I'm going to let down this blind and then you'll be off to sleep in a jiffy."

"I don't know what that is, a jiffy."

"It's what you're going to sleep in," he said.

AND then he forgot Su Mei until he was on his way to the hospital next morning. Soon after driving his car off the ferry-boat from the island, he caught a sudden glimpse of a pale, beautiful face in the crowd on a pavement, a face he half-recognized.

It wasn't until he turned in at the hospital gates that he realized who it was the face had reminded him of. And the moment he was inside the building there was news of her.

"She's gone," the stout theatre sister told him. "With that hole right through her. She told Sister Travers you'd said she'd be better today so she was leaving because she had something important to see to. Travers was busy and told her not to talk nonsense and the next thing she knew the cot was empty and the girl and her clothes gone. Nobody's seen her for an hour."

"Oh, yes they have," he told her. "I saw her down in Kowloon on my way here."

His day's programme was too full to allow him more than an occasional moment of concern and inquiry for the runaway. He had said she would collapse within a few hours, but by the time he drove back to his bungalow on the island that evening there had been no news from police or other hospitals. It was even possible, he reflected, as he drove past the crowded corner where he had glimpsed her that morning, for her to die unnoticed among those teeming crowds, the way thousands of Chinese die daily in their own land, where for so many centuries life had been cheaper than dirt. Only in this small alien corner of China could a lone Chinese look for a little help and common justice. Here somebody would care.

He was worried now. The child had so swiftly become an individual, a person, for him. She was . . . a sort of friend. Not merely a patient whose recovery mattered to him, not merely the first gunshot casualty to be admitted to the children's ward, but Su Mei, somebody he knew, somebody whose baffling blend of shining simplicity and mystery he was going to remember, whatever happened.

She came back next morning, in the ambulance that swung in through the main gates as he waved it past. "Found her in a church on the island," the theatre sister told him. "On her knees, unconscious. Been there all night."

He saw her an hour later, when he made his rounds of the children's ward. Stimulants had revived her and then a sedative had put her to sleep in the cot that was only just long enough for her. So far there were no signs of the dangerous complications he'd expected.

It was a busier day than usual and he was late preparing to leave, late for his good-night greeting through the door of the children's ward. All the bowls and chopsticks were being collected after the small patients' evening meal and the chorus of good nights was not muffled, as it usually was, by mouthfuls of rice.

THEN he saw the pair of burning eyes in cot number ten fixed on him in desperate entreaty. He went across.

"Why did they bring me back here again?" she asked. Her voice was down to an exhausted whisper.

"People have to be properly well before we say goodbye to them here," he told her.

She was silent for a moment, then: "What day is this?" she asked.

Taking her wrist automatically and counting the pulse, he told her the day of the week and month. When she heard him she snatched her hand away, held it a moment to her heart and then seized his hand in a hot, desperate grip.

"Then you must help me. The others say, 'Sleep, Su Mei,' but you understand that I cannot sleep." It was said with confidence and it was true. He didn't understand *why*, but he did understand that there was something that made rest impossible for her. He sat on her cot and began the same treatment as before. Her exhausted body and taut mind craved rest. If he could lull her anxiety again. . . .

He said, "Tell me some more about Sister Rosa and her roses and the paper-boat races."

But no, it didn't work this time. She only asked, "Will you help me?"

"Yes," was all he could say. He added, "Is it about the ribbon you had under your arm?"

She nodded her smooth black head and the words came gushing out. "You must help me, because I have no friends here and it is important. For myself I wouldn't ask you, but I didn't come all this way just for myself, you see. I am a . . . ." She hesitated.

"An agent?" he suggested.

"What is that?"

He told her, "Somebody who represents other people and does things in their name."

"Then that is what I am," she said. "An agent. And I must do what I was sent to do today."

"You mean, it's a message? Can I deliver it for you?"

"I'm so afraid I am too late." Tears sparkled between the thick lashes and the grasp on his hand relaxed helplessly.

He said, "Just tell me where I have to take it and I'll go now."

She closed her eyes painfully. "But I don't know," she moaned. "I don't know. I never knew Hongkong would be so big. Yesterday I asked so many people and none of them could help me. The only one who said she would help told me a lie; I heard her ask on the telephone for this hospital. She was going to send me back here. So I ran away." She was only a child now, a small child. When she asked shakily, "Will you find Sister Rosa for me?" he detected the final surrender to childhood helplessness, the turning to the one who had taken a dead mother's place, who had taken charge of all baby anxieties and disasters.

He said, "You mustn't worry. We'll find her."

"But today," she insisted. "Find her *today*."

"But you say she's far away in China."

SHE shook her head. "No, she is here in Hongkong. The new government put all the sisters in prison. When they were let out at last, Sister Rosa was sick, because she's very old now, you see. But they travelled to Canton—our new teachers wouldn't let us go and say goodbye to them—and after a long time they were able to get here, to Hongkong. Half a year ago. And we had news that Sister Rosa was too sick to go home with the others. She stayed in Hongkong."

Richard Brown's life was helping people in trouble who laid upon him the burden of their faith in his skill. Sometimes the faith was exaggerated and the burden tragic, but those were the people who needed his help most desperately. This was only the old story.

He said, "I'm going to call a friend on the phone. Maybe he can find Sister Rosa for you and then we can ask her to help."

It was a relief to escape momentarily from the faith and entreaty of her fine, steep-set eyes. When he came back, she was still tied in her tight knot of suspense. He said, "It's all right, Su Mei. I can take you to Sister Rosa."

The joy that flamed up in her eyes was something he knew he would remember for a long time.

"Today?"

"Now. We'll get a chair for you."

As he was pushing her himself to the ward

*Continued on page 41*

# *THE ANTELOPE BOY*

HE was long-limbed, graceful, his body tanned by sun and wind, and he lived with the wild antelope in the freedom of the mountains. He knew nothing of the world below.

And then came the men from the city, to hunt and capture him. . . .

*This brilliant new story by John Kruse has been superbly illustrated by Harold Forster. It will appear, complete . . .*

***IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK***

Teen-age girls mob him, but Max is a family man at heart. On free evenings, he romps with his children, Christine, Antony and Maxine

In an immaculate suit, on the stage of Blackpool's Hippodrome, Max uses songs, jokes and patter to put over his personality

# Max Bygraves has fun fooling his friends

*by KEITH ELLIS*

**Anyone who meets him off-stage must be ready for anything, for he takes his sense of humour home—to concoct practical jokes**

THE STRUGGLING YOUNG comedian with the build of a heavyweight, black wavy hair and a pleasant cockney twang, burst on to the stage of a small provincial theatre five years ago and ripped off a couple of jokes. It was hot, and the few people who had paid for admission sweated glumly in the sticky atmosphere. The young man tried a comedy imitation. Again there was silence. Feeling as hot and depressed as his audience, he swung a chair to the front of the stage, reversed it and sat astride.

"I don't know why I should stand while you lot sit down," he said, and for the rest of his act he chatted amiably from his seat. "I got more laughs than I'd ever had before," recalls Max Bygraves. "So I decided to change my style accordingly."

Bygraves's relaxed, intimate style has made him one of Britain's most highly paid comedians. He has three Royal Command performances to his credit, is reputed to draw from £700 to £900 a week on the halls and, until he recently resigned "because I didn't want to stuff myself down the public's throat," was chief comedian of radio's top variety show, *Educating Archie*. Of his many records, "Cowpuncher's Cantata," his own satire on cowboy songs, has sold more than a quarter of a million copies. "In a good week," he says, "including music hall, radio, recordings and two Sunday concerts, my gross earnings have touched two thousand pounds." He has also made two extremely successful visits to the United States, where his earnings reached £125 a minute on television and more than £1,250 a week at New York's Palace Theatre.

People who have heard Bygraves only in *Educating Archie* have written, after seeing him, to say that they expected a bald little man of forty, and were pleasantly surprised. In fact, he is loose-limbed, thirty, more than six feet tall and weighs 12 stone 12 pounds. "Max undoubtedly has sex appeal," says Roy Speer, producer of *Educating Archie*. Combined with his singing ability, it accounts for the stage-door crowds of teenage girls wearing his photograph in a locket and begging for his autograph.

At the last night of his long pantomime run at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, they packed the house. When he finished "Half As Much," ecstatic voices cried out: "Sing it again, Max." As he sang the line "Won't you come over and play?" in "Little Sir Echo," there was a barrage of female wolf-whistles. "You bet, Max!" they shouted. "See you after the show."

The teenagers were unaware, however, that Mrs. Bygraves was also watching the show from a box and that, on his free evenings, Bygraves much prefers to stay at home playing with his three children, Christine, aged ten, Antony, six, and Maxine, two. For the summer season at Blackpool, where he is appearing in *Latin Quarter*, he has taken a house so that his family can be with him.

Bygraves's music hall act is a blend of jokes, songs, imitations and patter, designed more to put his personality over than to please in themselves. Dressed in an immaculate gaberdine suit, he stands with one foot on a chair to drawl out an anecdote, leaps around in a comic imitation or jigs his body in time to a song. "He knows just where to put the light and shade," says Eric Sykes, the scriptwriter, "and he's a shrewd judge of what his audiences like."

He rarely sings a sentimental number "straight." During one current tear-jerker, his

Max usually fools in sentimental songs. "I'm not good enough to be a straight singer," he says

pianist walks on to the stage, hands him a cup, goes off, returns to fill it with tea and in further excursions on to the stage adds milk and finally two lumps of sugar. Bygraves, who has been unconcernedly pouring out his heart, pretends suddenly to notice, calls his pianist back and snaps: "One only." Whereupon the pianist returns yet again and messily fishes out a half-dissolved lump.

"The girls hate him for spoiling his songs," says Bygraves's pretty, twenty-two year old secretary, Pat Funnell. But Bygraves explains: "I don't think I'm good enough to be a straight singer. Besides, it leaves them asking for more." Also, it pleases the older people, for whom the sentiment of his songs has less appeal.

### Taught Bore A Lesson

"In private life," says Charles Price, manager of Birmingham's Theatre Royal, "Max's relaxed approach enables him to put a complete stranger at ease by talking to him at his own level. He is modest and has no star complex."

Bygraves has also maintained a commonsense attitude towards money; he is neither mean nor unduly extravagant. With a small party of friends, he was awaiting his order in the restaurant of a smart provincial hotel when an overbearing little man, with a cigar sticking out of the corner of his mouth, breezed up to their table and congratulated him on his performance.

"Mind if I join you?" he asked. Without waiting for an answer, he drew up a chair. Bygraves, who had never seen him before, resigned himself to having his meal spoiled by an obvious bore.

"I'm a mill-owner," announced the man. "Got mills all over the place." Between wolfing his food, tossing back the wine and breathing cigar-smoke over the table, he boasted freely of his wealth, and treated Bygraves to a few crumbs of advice about watching his money.

Bygraves listened patiently and, at the end of the meal, asked for his "guest" to be included in the bill. When the waiter presented it, Max rose, replaced his chair and smiled charmingly at the millowner. "Thanks for the meal," he said. "I hope you can afford it." He then walked smartly out.

Unlike some older comedians, Bygraves has a strong sense of humour off-stage, and is likely to greet a chance phone caller with "Chinese Embassy here" or "This is the Battersea Dog's Home." When Eric Sykes was recently in hospital, the two of them started a long feud of practical jokes in which honours are so far even. Sykes was in a private ward and, after every broadcast of *Educating Archie*, Bygraves came to tell him whether the audience had appreciated his script.

One day Sykes arranged with the nurses that Bygraves was to be told he was extremely ill and that his mind might wander. Bygraves was to be asked to wear a surgical mask and, if Sykes were to ramble, to tell him a fairy story.

Looking dreadfully serious, Bygraves edged into the ward, smiled nervously and asked Sykes how he was feeling. "He looked so funny," says Sykes, "that I burst out laughing." Bygraves looked more serious than ever and tried to quieten him. "Take the mask off," said Sykes, "it's all a joke." Bygraves desperately started to recite: "Once upon a time there were three bears. . . ."

A few days later, a specialist was shown into Sykes's room. After making a cursory examination, he announced: "I'm afraid it's pretty serious." Sykes became as white as his bedsheets. "Have you thought of making a will?" went on the specialist. In a strangled voice, Sykes asked: "How long?" The specialist considered. "Perhaps a day," he said. "Perhaps a little longer."

### Friendly Battle Of Wits

"Just then," says Sykes, "it struck me I had seen the man before. I questioned him about his background. It gradually came to me that he wasn't a specialist at all, but an actor. Outside, in the corridor, Max was just about bursting himself."

Not long ago, Eric Sykes had a telephone call from Bygraves: "Come up to Birmingham immediately. I've a wonderful idea for a gag." Sykes packed his bag and rushed to the station. "It was only when I was asking the times of the trains that I remembered he wasn't in Birmingham at all," says Sykes. "He was at home in London."

At that time, Bygraves had just moved into a new house and was worried about some oil that was polluting a pond at the bottom of his garden. Sykes rang him up, pretending he was an official of the Metropolitan Water Board. He said that an official would be calling to look into the matter, and would Mr. Bygraves kindly leave a bucket of water outside his front door? Sykes chuckles at the recollection. "Max kept that bucket outside for a whole week," he says.

The son of an ex-professional boxer who is now a docker, Bygraves was born in Bermondsey, in the East End of London, and christened William Walter. He left school at fourteen and was apprenticed to a carpenter. When he volunteered for the R.A.F. in 1940, his only connection with the entertainment industry had been an occasional bout as an amateur boxer, and performances with the school choir.

A few hours after he arrived at his first R.A.F. camp, however, he earned moderate applause at a camp concert with a number of comedy impressions, including one of Max Miller. "After that," he says, "I was known as Max."

### Best Act In The R.A.F.

Posted to Fighter Command as a fitter, he appeared regularly in camp concerts and, in 1943, before an adjudicating committee which included Ivor Novello and C. B. Cochran, he won a national contest at London's Adelphi Theatre for the best act in the R.A.F. Meanwhile he had married Gladys, a slim, dark-haired W.A.A.F. whom he calls "Blossom," and by the time he was demobbed in January, 1946, they had a daughter.

Bygraves went back to carpentering, but his wage of £4 16s. was hardly sufficient to keep a family, so he decided to supplement it with entertainment work. "I played pubs and clubs —anything to make a few bob," he says. His success, however, turned his thoughts to show business as a career. One day he met one of his former commanding officers, who suggested that he should try an audition for the ex-Services radio series *They're Out*. He did so, and was successful. With the prospect of better engagements, he gave up carpentering for good.

The next two years were hard. A spot in a Jack Payne show kept him going for eight or nine months, but when he applied for the post of resident comedian in *Variety Bandbox* the B.B.C. decided in favour of Frankie Howerd. He did, however, broadcast occasionally in *Bandbox* and in other shows. "He'd hate to be reminded of it now," says Roy Speer, "but in those days he used to fall flat on his face to get a laugh from the studio audience as he came on."

### One Week Brought Fame

Eventually, Bygraves worked his way to the number one dates and came as fourth top to London's Finsbury Park Empire. Val Parnell, booking manager of the Palladium, watched the show on the Monday night. On the Wednesday night, Bygraves had a ring from his agent: "Ted Ray won't be able to appear at the Palladium tomorrow night. V.P. wants you to fill in." In that same week, Bygraves was also hired as the odd-job man in *Educating Archie*.

Of his Palladium spot, Bygraves says: "I think V.P. wanted to see whether I was ready for the big time." Parnell evidently thought so, for he engaged Bygraves for the two weeks immediately following a bill headed by Abbott and Costello, and took the unprecedented course of holding him over for another two weeks on a bill headed by Donald Peers. Over the next two years, Bygraves appeared at the Palladium eight times.

Bygraves's future seems assured. "Provided he keeps his modesty, he can stay at the top as long as he likes," says Jack Taylor, the Blackpool impresario. His present plans include an autumn show and a pantomime at the Palladium, followed by another West End show. Later, he plans further trips to America and perhaps one or two films.

"He has the world at his feet," says Roy Speer, "and his success has not made the slightest difference to him." THE END

# MILK chocolate

# Munchmallow

FROM MACDONALDS OF GLASGOW—WHO BAKE THE BEST BISCUITS

## DEATH AND THE SKY ABOVE

*Continued from page 10*

job that suited her perfectly. At one time she had wanted to be an actress, and had put in a year's hard work at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art before realizing that her talent was not sufficiently unusual to offer much of a prospect in such an overcrowded profession. Then she had switched to newspaper reporting, first in the provinces and afterwards in Fleet Street, but again she had been competent rather than brilliant. She had enjoyed the interviewing, but she had never been very good at the rough-and-tumble assignments that were inseparable from general reporting.

Television had given her just the medium she needed.

To become a successful commère in a popular magazine programme you had to be able to organize a bit, and act a bit, and talk to people easily in front of the cameras, and, of course, look nice, and she could do all these things. She had found her niche.

PROFESSIONALLY speaking, she felt very content as she swung the car into the London road after seeing the ex-Commissioner. These preliminary interviews didn't always turn out so well. Though she had a natural friendliness which was an enormous asset in her job, some people took a great deal of breaking down, and with a thirty-minute programme to put on every fortnight there were limits to the time she could devote to each individual. But Sir John had been the perfect subject—direct in his manner, clear-cut in his views, and eager to co-operate. He was going to be very photogenic, too, with his crisp silver hair and fine head. At twenty-nine, Kathryn preferred maturity to youthful good looks—which was just as well, she reflected, since Charles wouldn't see forty again.

Her thoughts took a familiar path back to the interview that had started it all, nearly two years ago now, when she had called on Charles Hilary at his London hotel and he had talked to her about the problem of feeding-stuffs in Antigua! It had been an odd start to a romance, but he hadn't been so solemn at rehearsal, and by the time they'd faced the cameras together they'd both wanted to go on meeting. It was natural enough, she supposed—nurses often married their patients, after all, and television interviewers were a bit like nurses, encouraging and sustaining their subjects. . . . Only, in their case, they hadn't married.

A cloud settled on her face. What a hopeless situation they'd got into! They'd reached a point where being together wasn't much fun any more, they were both so tense and strained. That stupid quarrel she had started last night!—sheer nerves, of course, but if they had many more scenes like that everything would go sour on them.

Poor Charles! Still, he'd have to get over those scruples of his and make a decision. In the end he would, of course—she hadn't a doubt about it, or about what the decision would be. But why wait? She wondered how he'd fared with Louise, and her foot pressed down harder on the accelerator.

It was nearly six when she reached the studio. She cleared up one or two things on her desk and then she went along to the film library to see if Bob Sanderson could help her with pictures.

Bob was a lanky adolescent whose job—a menial one, in his view—was to file away enormous quantities of film in flat, circular tin boxes according to the instructions of his chief, Mr. Sprott, and stand by in the evenings in case anyone should want something suddenly. Unlike Kathryn, he was a square peg in a round hole. His passion was sport—as a participant, when he could manage it, and vicariously when he couldn't. His ambition was to become a sports writer, like his friend Leslie Holmes on the *Record*. His nose was buried in the sporting page of a newspaper when Kathryn looked in.

"Hallo, Bob—you don't seem very busy."

He whipped his feet off the table when he saw who it was. He had got over the worst of his calf-love for Kathryn, but he still thought she was smashing.

"Here's something that's right up your street." She sat down at the table and opened Fawcett's book, *A Policeman Looks Back*. "Do you think you could find some film showing police and miners playing football together during the General Strike?"

HE took the book from her and examined the photograph. "I dare say."

"And I want something about those Irishmen who put bombs in the Underground—I.R.A."

"Do you want to see them now?"

"Not specially. Just put them aside, and you can run them through for me on Monday evening. I shall only want about thirty seconds of each."

He nodded. "Did you get a chance to see any of the Wimbledon stuff?"

"No, I've been up to my eyes."

"Well, have a look at this." He switched on a projector and a picture appeared on a small screen at the end of the room. It was the centre court. People were sitting with newspapers folded over their heads to keep the sun off and looked as though they were being slowly fried. Behind them an indicator showed that Miss Maureen Connolly was leading her opponent by three games to two in the second set. The camera switched to a sturdy young woman who at once lashed a ball with devastating precision into the farthest corner of the court.

"Little Mo!" said Bob, in a tone of hushed hero-worship. "Isn't she super?"

They watched an exciting rally or two. Then Kathryn said, "Yes, she's wonderful—but I really must run."

Bob switched off. "Okay, Kathryn, I'll have the stuff by Monday. So long."

She smiled her thanks and went quickly back to her room to collect her belongings.

A few minutes later she was on her way to her Chelsea flat. The rush-hour traffic had thinned and she drove fast, with hardly any checks. She had just changed her clothes when the telephone rang. It was Charles, to see if she were back. Twenty minutes later she heard his double hoot outside and went to let him in.

He took her into his arms with a grateful sigh, resting his cheek against her thick, dark hair and holding her very tight. For a moment they kissed and clung together in a fervour of unspoken reconciliation.

Then he said ruefully, "I'd better tell you at once, darling—it didn't work. It was just like hammering on a brick wall. I didn't make the slightest impression."

She felt hardly a trace of disappointment, for it was only what she had expected. "Oh, well," she said, "come and have a drink." She poured sherry while he fumbled with his pipe and tobacco pouch.

"How did you get on with Fawcett?" he asked.

"Oh, he's a lamb. We hit it off perfectly." She handed him his drink. "Come on, darling, what happened—can you bear to tell me?"

He told her.

"Oh, Charles, isn't it wicked? Really, the law's monstrous. . . ! What was she like—was she sober?"

"Sober enough to know what she was saying—to start with, anyhow. She got very abusive towards the end—really nasty."

THEY were silent. Finally, Kathryn said, "Well, there it is." She lit a cigarette. "We've done our best—now there's nothing for it but to put Plan B into operation."

"I still think that it's a hell of a step to take," said Charles gloomily. "It's your being so well-known that's the trouble. If two ordinary people decide to live together as man and wife when they're not, the chances are that no one will know or care. But when one of them's by way of being a celebrity. . . ."

"We'll be living abroad, don't forget."

"Yes, I know, but the newspapers are bound to wonder what's happened to you and sooner or later someone will recognize you. I can just imagine the sort of publicity there'll be then."

"Oh, Charles, really! Anyone would think we hadn't been over all this a thousand times already. You know how quickly people forget faces. We shall be living our own life—we'll probably never even seen an English newspaper. We'll find a nice, quiet spot somewhere in France, in the south, with a little terrace and a gorgeous view, and you can get on with your book and I'll prune the vines or whatever one does to them and we won't bother what anyone thinks at all."

"It sounds idyllic, the way you put it. But how long would it be, I wonder, before you found yourself missing the life you lead here, with all your friends and the excitement you're used to? Your work means a lot to you, after all, and you've the prospect of a fine career . . ."

She interrupted him impatiently. "Now look, Charles, we've discussed all this before—every bit of it. I won't pretend that I don't enjoy my job, and if we could marry and have a family and I could go on working in between, it would be heavenly. But we can't, my darling. And we can't go on as we are, either. Having the cottage and the boat is all very well, but it's only a makeshift and you know it. I'm tired of living separately all the week for the sake of appearances. I know I can't stand it much longer and I don't believe you can, either."

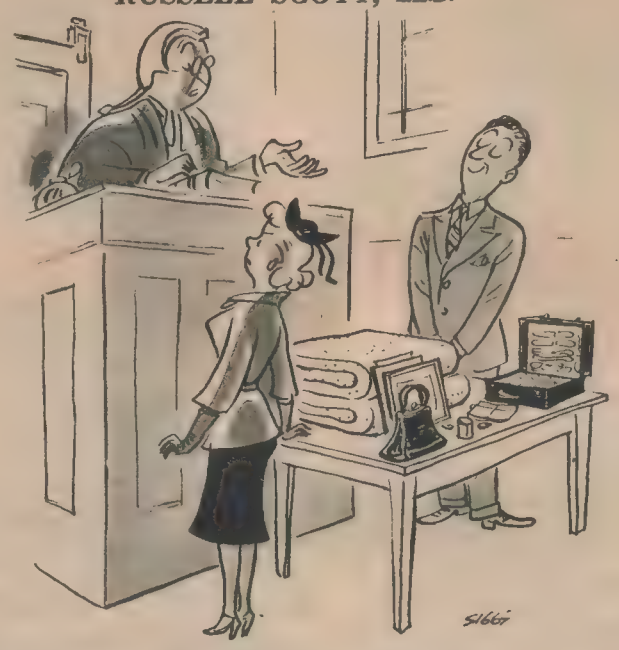
He nodded slowly. "Yes, that's all true . . ."

"I shall send in my resignation on Monday. I'm under contract for two more programmes and, of course, I'll have to do those, but by the middle of

# Consider your verdict

*by*

*RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B.*




SIDNEY loved Gloria deeply—or so he thought. A young and struggling accountant, he felt sure that this cool, capable girl would make an ideal wife. He received just the right amount of encouragement from her, for Gloria saw quite plainly that some day he would be a success.

He presented her with gifts—brooches, sketches, prints—hoping to win her heart. One day, in a burst of bravery, he proposed. To his surprise, Gloria accepted him—and the diamond ring.

Subsequently, still frightened of losing her, Sidney gave her a beautiful cigarette case and a handbag. While they planned their future home, he also bought her blankets, sheets and cutlery.

Two months passed before he saw Gloria with unclouded vision. Thinking back, he remembered with a shock that Gloria's ideas for the plans of their home and even for the colours of the curtains and the carpets had always prevailed. She had even persuaded him to apply for a particular partnership.

That night, when Gloria announced her wish to go to the cinema, Sidney declared that they would take a walk instead. She was amazed that he had dared to question her plans. "Don't be stupid, dear," she said. "Anyway, I don't like walking."

This precipitated the argument. At last, Gloria rashly declared that, if Sidney did not wish to please her now, the engagement must be considered broken. Sidney promptly agreed.

Gloria was more annoyed than hurt and was, candidly, quite angry at losing her fish. When her wounded pride healed, however, she made no move to mend matters.

Sidney asked for the return of the engagement ring and all the gifts he had showered on her from the time love had first burned within him. She refused to part with a thing.

So he sued her, contending that all the articles were given solely "in contemplation of marriage," and that an implied condition of the arrangement was that, if the marriage did not take place, everything must be given back.

Gloria defended scornfully. She asserted that the presents were given unconditionally, that Sidney loved her at the time and intended her to have them, and that he could not now impose conditions on something done and finished with months before.

***What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, see page 30***

September I'll be free. There's absolutely no point in our hanging about, so we could scrap the holiday we'd planned in Peter's boat and go to France instead. And we'll concentrate on finding somewhere to live."

She seemed so confident, so determined, that his last doubts were resolved. "All right, my love," he said, "I'll drop Peter a line tonight and tell him we shan't be needing Witch after all. That will make a start. With a bit of luck, we should be able to get fixed up comfortably before the winter."

"With a bit of luck," she said, "we'll forget what winters are like. Oh, Charles, it's going to be so wonderful!"

He took her face in his hands. "I love you, Kathryn. I'll always love you. I hope I'll make you happy." He kissed her tenderly. Then he gave a long sigh of thankfulness, as though a great burden had rolled away. "I say, why don't we go to Pedro's and celebrate?"

"Now you're talking!" said Kathryn. "Just give me two minutes."

Charles was still under the spell of their new happiness when, just before ten next morning, he turned his car into the forecourt of the big block in Hampstead where he lived. He parked beside a blue Austin in which two men were sitting talking and walked briskly through the hallway, nodding a cheerful "Good morning" to the porter. The day was perfect and he felt on top of the world.

He unlocked the door of his flat and was about to go in when footsteps sounded behind him and a voice said, "Excuse me, sir—are you by any chance Charles Hilary?"

He turned sharply, and saw that the two men from the Austin had followed him in. One was a tall, youngish man, with a fresh complexion; the other was older, with heavy shoulders and grizzled brows and moustache. They were both wearing navy suits and soft felt hats and they looked quietly formidable.

"Yes," he said, "I'm Charles Hilary."

"Then I'd very much like a word with you," said the older of the two. "My name is Bates—Chief-Inspector Bates of the C.I.D."

CHARLES stared at him in surprise. "Well, you'd better come in," he said after a moment. He collected his morning paper from the letter box and led the way inside. "What's the trouble, Inspector?"

"It's about your wife, sir—Mrs. Louise Hilary."

Charles became very still. "Oh, yes?"

"You haven't heard the news?" The inspector's voice had an undertone of scepticism.

"What news? I've heard nothing."

"I see. Well, I'm sorry to have to tell you, sir, that your wife has been found dead."

"Dead!" Charles met the inspector's scrutiny with shocked eyes. "Good God! When? Where?"

"Yesterday afternoon, at her house in Clandon Mews. She was strangled."

"*Strangled!*" In horror he gazed first at one policeman, then at the other. "Oh, my God!" He sat down. He felt sick. Into his mind there had come the picture of Louise lying back on her couch, taunting him. He saw again the thin neck that he had wanted to choke the life out of in that moment of almost ungovernable anger. And now somebody had done it. It was horrible—uncanny.

The inspector's voice broke into his thoughts. "We found a letter in the bedroom, Mr. Hilary, which appeared to have come from you." His tone could hardly have been more accusing if it had been a bomb they had discovered.

With the clarity of revelation, Charles suddenly saw the danger in which he stood. If they'd found the letter, they knew about his desperate state of mind, about the divorce that Louise had refused, about Kathryn. It seemed fantastic, but they had grounds for suspecting *him* of the murder.

"Your letter indicated that you wanted to see her urgently. You didn't, I suppose, see her yesterday?"

For a split second, Charles wavered between the invited "No," the incriminating "Yes." He needed time to think. To say "Yes" might involve him in explanations, protestations—they might even think that Kathryn had been concerned. . . .

"No," he said sharply, "I didn't see her yesterday. I *had* wanted to, as a matter of fact, but when I rang her up early in the morning she told me she was going away and would have to pack. . . ." Once the lie was told, words came pouring out to bolster it. He looked more confidently at Bates. "Surely, Inspector, you don't imagine that *I* had anything to do with this?"

"I'm not imagining anything, sir," Bates said. "I'm merely seeking information. When, in fact, *did* you last see your wife?"

"Oh, quite a long time ago—early in July, I think."

Bates nodded, and glanced at his notebook. The tension seemed to ease a little. It's all right, Charles thought—they won't be able to prove I was there. But his heart continued to beat violently, so that it seemed to him the two men couldn't fail to hear it.

"Well, sir," said the inspector, after a pause, "perhaps you can give me a little help. Do you happen to know anything about your wife's relationships with other people? Other—men?"

"I doubt if there's much I can tell you about that. . . . Oh, there was one thing . . ." He mentioned the taxi incident in Piccadilly. "But I couldn't describe the man," he said. "I only saw his back."

Bates was visibly unimpressed. "You know of no—friendship? No liaison? She never mentioned anyone?"

"No, Inspector. I'm afraid my wife had become almost a stranger to me. We've been living in separate establishments for nearly two years, you see, and we rarely met."

"Quite so." Bates gave a little cough. "As a matter of interest, sir, what *were* you doing yesterday afternoon?"

"I was at the Oval, watching the cricket."

"With a companion?"

"No, alone."

"H'm. I wonder if you'd mind giving me a rough idea of your timetable from lunchtime onwards. Pure routine, you understand—we have to ask these questions."

"I realize that, of course . . . Well, now, let me think . . ." Briefly, he told how he had dropped into the pub for a beer and a sandwich and how he'd suddenly got the idea that he'd like to see the Test match. "I drove down just before two o'clock and went into the ground soon after the resumption of play—say, twenty past two. I stayed till about a quarter to four, and then came home."

"Yes, I see." Bates glanced at his colleague. "All right, Mr. Hilary, I think that's all for the moment—except that I'd feel obliged if you'd let Sergeant Nixon here take your fingerprints."

*Fingerprints!* For a moment Charles gaped at the inspector. That was something he had completely overlooked. They would go over the house for fingerprints, of course—and they would find his! They would find them on the bottle of rum and on the glass he had handed to Louise. He stood aghast at the enormity of his blunder.

"Well, sir?"

Desperately he tried to repair the damage. "Look, Inspector, I—I'm afraid I misled you. I *was* at my wife's house yesterday—but not in the afternoon. In the morning. I left her before one o'clock and I swear I didn't see her again."

The grey eyes of Inspector Bates had become very cold. "Why didn't you tell me this in the first place?"

"Because I saw what a frightful position I was in. I'm sorry—it was an idiotic thing to do. I realize that now."

"Now that circumstances have compelled you to admit the truth, you mean?"

Charles took a deep breath. "The truth is that I did not kill my wife. She was alive when I left her. But you'd read that letter, and you made it plain enough that you suspected me. The fact that I happened to be with her in the morning had nothing to do with her death, but I thought you would draw the wrong conclusions if I told you I'd been there."

Bates grunted. "Well, I shall have to ask you to accompany me to the station, I'm afraid."

"You mean you're arresting me?"

"No, sir, I'm not arresting you, but in view of what's happened we shall have to know a great deal more about your movements and it will be more convenient at the station."

Sitting back in the car, with the stolid inspector at his side, it occurred to him that perhaps he ought to ask for a lawyer to be present at the resumed interview. Yet that was necessary, surely, only when a man had something to hide and might give his case away by talking too freely? As an innocent suspect, his own best course was obviously to be frank about everything.

AND when, at the police station, Chief-Inspector Bates cautioned him and invited him to tell the full story, he did so with relief. The shorthand writer's pen moved swiftly over the pages.

Bates heard him out in silence, and then began to put questions.

"Did you happen to mention to anyone else that you were going to pay this visit in the morning?"

Charles shook his head. Kathryn had known he was going, of course, but she hadn't known when, and anyhow the last thing he wanted to do was to bring her into it.

"Did you stop anywhere on your way from your flat to the mews?"

"No."

"Did you park your car in the mews?"

"No, a little way down the road on the other side."

"Why did you do that?"

"It was a very hot morning and that was the nearest bit of shade."

"I see. Do you think anyone saw you as you approached the mews, or as you left it?"

"I rather doubt it," said Charles ruefully, remembering how he had been congratulating himself on the fact only a short time ago. "I don't recall seeing anyone. I suppose I just happened to hit on a quiet part of the day."

"H'm. Now what about after you left the mews? You say you went to this pub in Duncannon Street. Would anyone there remember you, do you think?"

"I imagine the barman would. He knows me by sight."

"But he wouldn't know where you'd come from?"

"No."

"When you got to the Oval, what part of the ground did you go into—one of the enclosures?"

"Oh, they were all full—the whole place was pretty packed. I went in with the crowd, and even so I had quite a job to find standing room."

Nixon intervened. "Did you buy a score card?"

"Yes."

"Did you keep it?"

Charles frowned. "No, I don't think I did. I seem to remember screwing it up and throwing it away just before I left."

The pen flowed on. Nixon studied his nails.

"Did you speak to anyone during the afternoon?" Bates resumed. "Anyone who might remember you?"

"No, Inspector. I wasn't in a very chatty frame of mind." Charles was beginning to feel the strain. "I wish I could think of someone."

"At least you can describe the game."

Charles hesitated. "I'll try, but I don't pretend to be an expert on cricket. . . . India were batting, of course. . . ."

"If you could just describe what you can remember of the game—any incidents, any excitement, any wickets taken, changes of bowler and so on. . . ."

FOR fifteen minutes Charles groped painfully in his memory while Bates took him through the afternoon's play. It was a gruelling examination, and he knew he wasn't doing very well. Several times Nixon gave an audible sniff, and once, unnervingly, he took a newspaper from his pocket and referred to it.

The interview was interrupted by a tap at the door and the inspector was called to the telephone. He was away a few minutes, and returned briskly. "Well, Mr. Hilary," he said, "there's been a development—quite a piece of luck. We've found a woman who says she saw a man leave your wife's flat in Clandon Mews about half past three yesterday afternoon and she thinks she might be able to identify him."

"Thank God for that!" Charles exclaimed.

"If you wouldn't mind attending an identification parade straight away," said the inspector, "I shan't need to trouble you any more."

"Right!" said Charles eagerly. "Let's get it over."

There were several men already waiting in the yard of Gate Street police station when Charles joined them, and others were being shepherded in from the city pavements to do their civic duty. Most of them were of about Charles's own age and physical stamp, and all were hatless. Soon there were eleven besides himself.

After a few minutes, Bates appeared and asked them to form a line against the wall. Then the woman was brought out. She was of medium height, quietly dressed, and about forty years old. Her pleasant face wore a rather serious expression. She walked quickly along the row, giving only the briefest glance at each face. But opposite Charles, she stopped.

"That's the man," she said, after the merest trace of hesitation.

Charles stiffened in horror. "Why, I've never seen you before in my life. . . ."

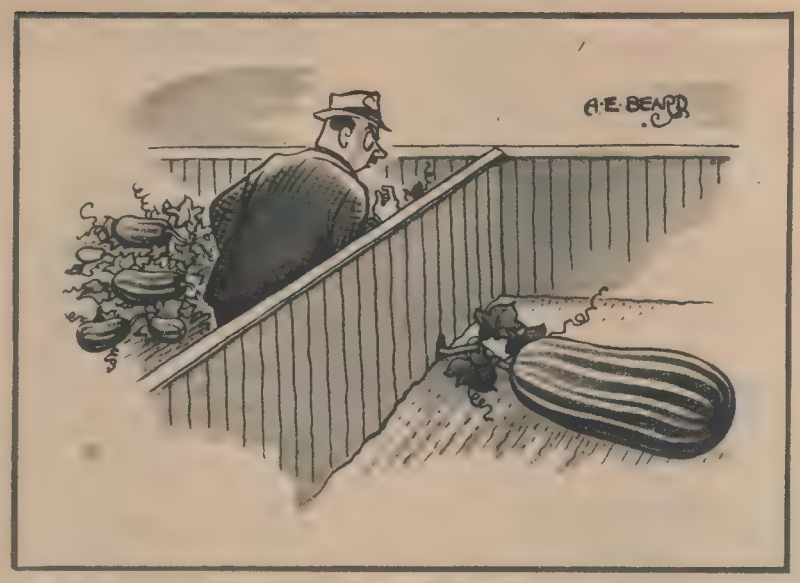
"But I've seen you," she said.

There was a moment's silence. Eleven men cast curious glances at Charles. Then Nixon took the woman away and the line broke up.

Charles felt a hand tighten on his arm. "Better come inside," said Bates.

* * *

"Charles Edward Hilary, you are charged in the indictment that on the



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third day of August of this year you murdered Louise Mary Hilary. Charles Edward Hilary, are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty."

From the Old Bailey dock, Charles caught and returned Kathryn's phantom smile. At least, the waiting was almost over.

Three weeks had dragged by since his arrest—three weeks into which a lifetime of anxiety had been compressed. His chief feeling had been one of incredulity that he could actually be in prison on a murder charge. The whole thing was a horrible, stupid mistake and it was only a question of time before the police would be led to the real murderer and he would be released.

Then, as talks with his solicitor and counsel had brought home the gravity of his position, his mood had changed. He had gone through a period of anger at the monstrous injustice of it all; anguish at the thought of what Kathryn must be going through; chilling loneliness in the long nights; shameful spasms of self-pity; hot waves of fear. Hope, despair and hope again. . . .

Now, as he listened to the jury being empanelled, incredulity returned. It seemed fantastic beyond belief that the purpose of all this ceremony was to weigh and judge *his* guilt, when in fact he knew no more about Louise's death than the usher did. Yet here he was, the prisoner in the dock at one of the most publicized trials the Old Bailey had seen for many years.

He moistened his lips and gazed nervously around the court. The crowd that had packed the public benches must be only a fraction of the mob that had failed to get in.

It was because of Kathryn, of course, that the queue had begun to form at five; because of Kathryn that the newspapers were preparing to sell extra editions and the case was a topic of conversation in every corner of the country. She had been almost like another member of the family to hundreds of thousands of television viewers, so that it wasn't surprising that people should be interested—but it was hateful to think what they must be saying.

At least, if they expected juicy, intimate revelations about their fallen idol, they were going to be disappointed. That was one advantage of not having much of a defence—the prosecution could afford to be gentlemanly. According to Murgatroyd, there wouldn't be much excitement about the trial. It would be over quickly.

As Charles looked up at the gallery, eyes focused on his face with avid curiosity. Only Kathryn, sitting beside her brother in the body of the court, met his glance with a message of assurance. She was pale, dreadfully pale, but as calm and sustaining as she had been all through.

Sir Francis Duke, Q.C., patted his wig, hitched up his gown and rose majestically. "May it please your lordship! I appear in this case on behalf of the Crown with my learned friend Mr. Forbes. The prisoner, Charles Hilary, has the advantage of being represented by my learned friends Mr. Leo Murgatroyd and Mr. Hollis. . . ."

Duke made an excellent prosecuting counsel. He was a big, solid man, with the sort of presence that inspires confidence in juries. He could be relied upon to put the Crown case fully and effectively, while still conceding whatever was proper to the other side. There was nothing spectacular about his methods, nothing at all magnetic about his personality, but then this case called for no special brilliance—not on the prosecution side. The facts would speak eloquently enough for themselves.

"Members of the jury," he began. "At about a quarter to four on the afternoon of Friday, August third, the body of Louise Hilary was discovered in the sitting-room of her house at 1 Clandon Mews, Kensington, where she lived alone. The discovery was made by a messenger boy, Arthur Mason, who had called to deliver a railway ticket from the Wide World Travel Agency. Getting no reply to his knock, and having been told that Mrs. Hilary was expecting him, he peered through the vertical slit of the letter box to see if there was any sign of her. To his horror, he saw a pair of legs outstretched upon the sitting-room floor in an attitude which plainly indicated that something was amiss.

"He went at once to a nearby telephone box and dialled 999. The police arived a few minutes later, forced the door, and found that Louise Hilary was dead. She had been strangled.

"Now it has been possible to establish, within comparatively narrow limits, at what time this murder was committed. Shortly before three fifteen that afternoon Louise Hilary made a telephone call to the Wide World Travel Agency, asking what happened about the ticket for Paris which she had ordered. Her voice was recognized by a clerk, William Harbin, who had dealt with her travel requirements on a number of previous occasions. We can therefore say with certainty that she was alive at a quarter past three. By a quarter to four, the recorded time of the messenger boy's 999 call, she was dead. She had been murdered within those thirty minutes. The absence of any signs of forcible entry at the house shows that the murderer was admitted by Louise Hilary herself and that he was therefore an acceptable visitor.

"In the submission of the prosecution, there can be no doubt who that visitor was. During the course of a routine search of the premises, the police discovered, on a bottle of rum in the sitting-room and on a glass from which Louise Hilary had been drinking, several clear fingerprints which were subsequently identified as those of her husband, Charles Hilary. Investigations by the police have failed to produce evidence that any other man was present in the house that afternoon.

"Members of the jury, those fingerprints were not the only discovery. On Louise Hilary's bed a letter was found—a letter from her husband which she had evidently received that morning. . . ."

Leo Murgatroyd, Q.C., listened to the prosecution case with outward calm and inward trepidation. He was a short, stocky man, physically unimpressive, but in the top flight of defence advocates. In addition to technical skill and lucidity of mind, which were the common tools of his profession, he had those rarest of lawyer's gifts—imagination and some understanding of human beings. On more than one occasion he had snatched a favourable verdict from seemingly certain defeat by his success in projecting a client vividly and sympathetically to a stolid jury.

TODAY, however, he had no confidence that such tactics would work. The prosecution's case was eighty per cent conceded—the *admitted* facts were almost enough to hang Hilary. The only hope would have been to account satisfactorily for the other twenty per cent—or at least to put forward a theory sufficiently plausible to raise a reasonable doubt. But they still knew almost nothing about Louise Hilary's activities and, as Duke had said, there was no hint of an alternative suspect.

The barrenness of the defence case was not due to any lack of effort on the part of Robert Fairey, the experienced criminal lawyer from whom Murgatroyd had received his instructions. Private detectives had been employed to investigate every aspect of Louise Hilary's life. But nothing helpful had emerged. No man had ever been seen coming to the house, or leaving it, and

## Consider your verdict

IN the case on page 28, the judge ruled that Gloria had broken the engagement. Therefore, the law implied a condition that she should return the ring, and all gifts made "in contemplation of marriage." As to the gifts before engagement, these were outright presents to keep her affections, and not conditional. But if Sidney had broken the engagement, he could have demanded nothing back. (*This is the probable decision, based on earlier judgments.*)

"Don't look so glum, Marjorie. I can hire another one"

the char, who came in two or three times a week, had never found any traces of a man's visit.

Louise, it appeared, had spent a good deal of her time alone in the house, with her rum and her television and her magazines. When she went away, she never confided to anyone where she had been or what she had been doing.

One stroke of luck—or so it seemed at the time—had been the finding of several receipted hotel bills in her handbag. Agents had been sent to the seaside hotels where she had stayed, but their investigations had produced no evidence that she had spent these periods with a man. On the contrary, such information as there was suggested that she had undertaken the trips alone.

The solicitor's efforts to get corroboration of Hilary's own movements had been equally fruitless. No one had come forward to say they had seen him visiting the mews in the morning and, as the prosecution had pointed out, his story about going to the Oval was unsubstantiated.

The first few witnesses had only routine evidence to give, and the coughing and shuffling of feet in court marked the release of tension. A surveyor provided a plan of the house at Clandon Mews and a police photographer the pictures he had taken of the scene. The messenger boy described his discovery of the body, and evidence was called confirming the time of the 999 call.

Next came William Harbin, the wide-awake young clerk from the travel agency. He explained that Mrs. Hilary had ordered a single ticket to Paris at twenty-four hours' notice and had rung up to make certain it had been secured. He knew her voice well and was in no doubt about her identity. He could swear to the time because he had looked at the clock when she had asked him about the ticket.

Next came the pathologist who had conducted the post mortem.

WITNESS followed witness without the defence being able to draw anything to its advantage. Duke dealt with them briskly and with little opposition from Murgatroyd.

Detective-Inspector Warren, one of the Yard's fingerprint experts, described how he had gone over the house in Clandon Mews for prints and had found identifiable ones of only three people —Louise Hilary herself, Mrs. Briggs, the charwoman, and the prisoner. Murgatroyd did his best with this awkward piece of evidence.

"Did you find the prisoner's fingerprints anywhere else in the house except on the bottle and the tumbler?"

"No."

"So although, as he himself agrees, he was in the house for some time, he would have left no trace of his visit if he hadn't happened to touch those objects?"

"That is so."

"Then it's reasonable to suppose, isn't it, that if some other man had visited the house and stayed there for a while and not happened to touch those objects, he also might have left no prints?"

"I suppose so."

"A criminal doesn't always leave fingerprints?"

"Oh, no."

"Speaking as an expert, Inspector, is it your experience that criminals are rather conscious these days of the danger of leaving their fingerprints behind?"

"Unfortunately, yes."

"Men who have made up their minds to commit a crime often take precautions against leaving fingerprints, or at least exercise great care?"

"That is so."

"Whereas an innocent man, of course, wouldn't bother about it?"

"No."

"Thank you."

INSPECTOR BATES followed, and then one Mary Agnes Scott. The woman's kindly face was even more worried-looking than when Charles had seen her at the identification parade.

It was formally established that she was forty-one years of age, a housewife, married with three children. On Friday, August 3, she had walked past the end of Clandon Mews, at about half past three.

She was sure of the time because she was on her way to the chemist's for a prescription that was to be ready then, and she had looked at her watch.

"Now, Mrs. Scott, will you tell the court what you saw as you passed the end of Clandon Mews?"

"I saw a man coming out of the first flat, the one nearest the road."

"Did you call at your local police station on the following morning and say that you had seen this man?"

"Yes. I read in the newspapers that a woman had been found murdered at 1 Clandon Mews and that the police wanted to talk to anyone who had seen anybody around there that afternoon. I went along to the mews to see if Number One was the house I had seen the man coming out of, and it was, so I thought I ought to tell the police about it."

"How did you describe the man to the police?"

"I said that he was tall and very sunburned and that he wasn't wearing a hat and that I thought he had brown hair."

"Were you subsequently taken by Inspector Johnson to Gate Street police station to see if you could identify the man?"

"Yes."

"Was there any discussion on the way about your description or about any person who might answer it?"

No, there had been no discussion. She waited in a room for a few minutes at the police station and then was taken into a yard for the identification parade. She had picked the man out at once.

"To the best of your knowledge, had

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you ever seen this man prior to that occasion?"

"No."

"Can you see the man in court now?"

"Yes."

"Please point him out."

"That's the man—the prisoner."

Murgatroyd rose unhurriedly and for a moment regarded the woman whose evidence, unless he was very much mistaken, was going to hang his client. He had studied her demeanour in the magistrate's court and had been favourably impressed by her manner. She was just the sort of witness to have a big effect upon a jury and he knew that unless he handled her very carefully indeed he might do more harm than good.

"Mrs. Scott, you do realize, I am sure, that a man's life may depend upon the evidence you are giving?"

"Yes, I realize that."

"So that if there is the least doubt in your mind, the merest shadow of a doubt, you should say so."

"I would, I really would, but there isn't."

Murgatroyd took her through the events of the day. "You say that on this Friday afternoon you were going to the chemist's to pick up some ointment. What was the ointment for?"

"My little boy had developed a skin rash on his face."

"Yes, I see. A nasty rash?"

"It was very unsightly."

"So you were naturally anxious to get the ointment as soon as possible?"

"Yes."

"Then what made you look into Clandon Mews as you passed by?"

"I heard a noise—I think it must have been the door of a house being slammed."

"So you turned your head, and you saw a man? About how far from you would you say he was when you saw him?"

"I should think—well, five or six yards. He was just moving away from the door."

"In what direction was he looking?"

"He was looking towards me."

"Did you stop or check your pace?"

"No."

"You heard the noise and just glanced round at him as you passed?"

"Yes."

"If you only gave him a passing glance, you couldn't, of course, have *studied* his face?"

"No, I didn't study it."

"Or his clothes?"

"No."

MURGATROYD cleared his throat. "That description you gave to the police—'tall, sun-burned, bare-headed, brown hair'—it could apply to a lot of people, couldn't it? You made no attempt to describe his features?"

"No."

"Was that because you'd received no more than an impression?"

"Yes, but it was a very clear impression. I couldn't describe his face but I knew it at once directly I saw it again."

"I appreciate that, but it is a fact, isn't it, that you couldn't remember any details of it—any particular details about the eyes or nose or mouth, for instance?"

"Nothing particular, no—just the face in general."

"So that when you attended the identification parade you weren't looking for a man with any particular facial characteristics that you'd made a mental note of at the time?"

"No, I was just seeing if I could recognize the face I'd seen."

"A face of which you had received a passing impression on a single occasion."

"Yes."

Murgatroyd glanced at the jury and sat down with every appearance of contentment. He did not in the least feel contented. She had been a very good witness, and despite the point he had won—that her identification of Hilary had been the result of a momentary look—her evidence sounded reliable. All he had left now was the prisoner himself. He was banking heavily on the impression of sincerity Charles Hilary carried.

His turn to go into the witness box came after the luncheon adjournment.

"My lord, I call the prisoner."

"Take the Book in your right hand," said the clerk. "Now, repeat after me . . ."

The initial impression, at least, was good. Hilary neither looked nor sounded like a guilty man as he stood upright with one hand on the ledge in front of him and quietly took the oath. Three weeks of mental stress had hollowed his cheeks and thinned his face and given him a rather fine, ascetic appearance. No one, seeing him now, could readily believe him capable of violence and brutal passion.

Murgatroyd turned squarely upon him.

"Charles Hilary, did you murder your wife?"

"I did not."

The impact of the direct question and the equally direct answer, coming unexpectedly at the very beginning of the examination, was dramatic. The defence had got away to a clean start. In his very brief opening remarks, Murgatroyd had declared that Hilary had nothing whatever to hide, and now he would try to justify his claim.

He proceeded on a more conversational note, putting his questions unhurriedly and giving the jury plenty of time to digest the answers. It was of vital importance to slow down the racing tempo of this trial. The prosecution, perhaps without intending to, had managed to leave the impression on the court that all was over bar the verdict. Murgatroyd intended that the jury should get to know Hilary; that they should see as much of him as possible.

STEP by step, Charles was guided through his long and not unmoving story.

Everything was faithfully dealt with—his twenty years of distinguished service in the West Indies, the nature of his work, how he had come to meet Louise, the failure of the marriage, and the causes of the eventual separation. He told how he had installed her in the house in Clandon Mews; he told of his meeting with Kathryn, and his visits and letters to Louise asking for a divorce, and the gathering crisis in his relations with Kathryn culminating on the evening before the murder when she said they must live together or part. So far it was the prosecution's case, admitted and expanded, but now came the first denial.

"Mr. Hilary, when Miss Forrester suggested on the night before the murder that you and she should go away and live together openly, what was your attitude?"

"I was very much opposed to it. I wasn't convinced that I could make her happy in those conditions and I hated the idea of her having to give up her job on account of me. She'd achieved so much, and I was proud of her."

"When you say that you were opposed to her suggestion, do you mean that you had decided against it?"

"No, I hadn't decided anything definitely at that time. I told Kathryn—Miss Forrester—that I would make one more approach to my wife and that if

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she was still adamant we'd talk about it again."

"The matter was still open?"

"Certainly."

"You have heard the submission of the prosecution that at the time you visited your wife you were faced with a choice between getting rid of her or losing Miss Forrester?"

"I have, but that wasn't the situation at all. Although we had a difference of opinion—Miss Forrester and I—there was never any real question of our breaking things up; Miss Forrester wanted us to go away, and I knew that in the last resort that was probably what we should do."

"Did you in fact come to a decision when you saw her again on the Friday evening?"

"Yes, we talked about it again and we finally agreed that she should give up her job and that we would go to France and look for a place to live."

"If you had already killed your wife, that decision would have been superfluous, would it not?"

"Completely."

"Did you at any time consider killing your wife as a way out of your difficulty?"

"Not for an instant. It wasn't a thing that would ever have occurred to me."

"Apart from any question of right or wrong, can you imagine that it could ever have been a solution of your problem?"

"In no circumstances. It would have been madness. If I'd done a thing like that I'd have had it on my mind for the rest of my life. Everything would have been ruined."

"The most irregular union would have been preferable?"

"Infinitely."

"Mr. Hilary, after you and Miss Forrester had taken this decision to go away together, what did you do? I mean, later that evening?"

"We went out to celebrate."

"What form did the celebration take?"

"We dined out at a restaurant and had a bottle of champagne and then we danced a little."

"You *danced*."

"Yes."

Murgatroyd gave a satisfactory nod. He knew that the line he was taking might strike some of the pundits as foolhardy, but as he had already made up his mind that the defence had nothing whatever to lose, shock tactics seemed justified.

"Mr. Hilary, did you ever consider the possibility that you might some day be able to start divorce proceedings yourself?"

"It had occurred to me."

"At this interview with your wife, did you mention the possibility?"

"I did. She laughed and said she was much too discreet and that I'd never get any evidence."

"Did she deny that there were any grounds?"

"No. I rather gathered that she was having affairs but that she was determined not to let them be known about. She said she hated me and was going to make sure I was tied to her for ever."

Item by item, the examination continued, and then there was nothing left but the last formal denials.

"You have heard the testimony of Mrs. Scott that she saw you leaving your wife's house that afternoon?"

"She is mistaken. I wasn't there."

"You swear that on your oath?"

"I do."

"Charles Hilary, I ask you again—had you anything to do with your wife's death?"

"Nothing whatever. I am absolutely innocent."

Murgatroyd gave the jury a challenging look, and resumed his seat. Charles braced himself to meet the prosecuting counsel's onslaught.

IN fact, the cross-examination proved to be less gruelling than he had expected. So much was now admitted by the defence that there was little further advance to be made by the prosecution. The inference to be drawn from the facts could be damning enough. Duke let himself go only once.

"Mr. Hilary, you have told us that you once saw your wife getting into a taxi with a man—I believe you said at lunchtime. Can you describe this man?"

"No, I only caught a glimpse of his back."

"Are you suggesting that getting into a taxi with a man at lunchtime—I am assuming for the moment that you haven't invented the whole episode—is evidence of adultery?"

"Of course not."

"But you suggested, did you not, that

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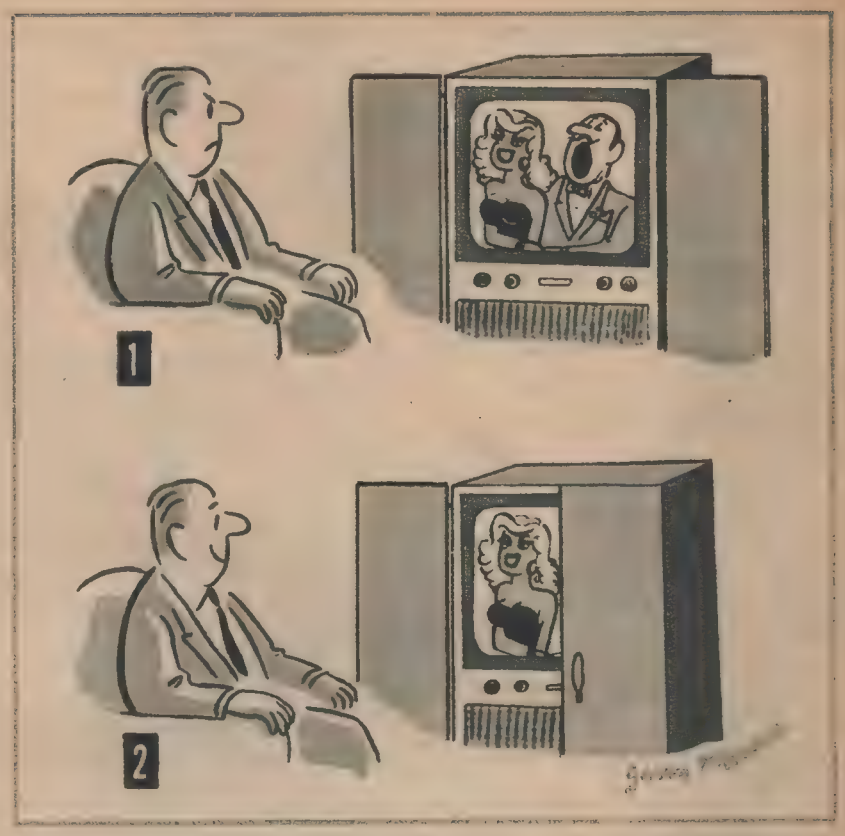


your wife had had immoral relations with other men?"

"I said she practically admitted having affairs."

"Please don't quibble. Are you or are you not asserting that in your view she had immoral relations with other men?"

"I suppose so, yes."

"Have you any idea who these hypothetical men friends were?"

"None. I've had almost nothing to do with my wife for two years—I know almost nothing about her life."

"Yet you accuse her of infidelity. Have you in fact a scrap of evidence that she was ever unfaithful to you?"

"Only the evidence of her own attitude."

"Answer my question. Had you any evidence?"

"No."

"In fact, you are trying to blacken your dead wife's character without a single shred of proof?"

Charles flushed angrily. "I'm simply telling you what I believe are the facts."

"I put it to you that you never tried to start divorce proceedings because you didn't really believe there was anything to find out?"

"That isn't so."

"I put it to you that this story of yours about the infidelity of your wife and about seeing her with a man in a taxi is a complete fabrication from start to finish. I submit that the whole purpose of your evidence has been to deflect suspicion from yourself on to some entirely non-existent lover?"

"I don't think he is non-existent. I didn't kill her, so there must have been someone else."

Sir Francis looked grim. "That will be for the jury to decide."

KATHRYN was silent as her brother drove her home after the adjournment. She had great faith in Murgatroyd; perhaps things would look different after he had made his final speech, but so far it seemed to her that there had been almost no defence at all. If only they could have *proved* something and not just had to rely on unsupported suggestions about Louise! Everybody said that Fairey was a very astute lawyer and presumably his inquiries had covered all the ground, but she couldn't help wishing that he had taken her more into his confidence. She would have been only too glad to try to get some evidence herself, but he had made it plain from the start that he thought the less she had to do with the case the better, and her offer of help had been rather stiffly turned down.

She had begged to be allowed to give evidence in court, but the lawyers had finally decided against that, too, and Charles had strongly supported them. Charles had done very well—his answers to Murgatroyd had been careful and thoughtful, with nothing evasive about them, and nothing theatrical. Of course, he had been indignant at Duke's contagious suggestions, but it had been honest indignation and couldn't have done any harm. It was surely impossible that any jury could have doubted he was telling the truth?—they must have realized that he was an innocent man caught in a net. Tomorrow they would say so. It was unthinkable that they could do anything else. . . .

THE following day. The closing speeches. Duke for the prosecution. "The Crown seeks no victory, but only justice based on facts. If the facts fail to convince you, members of the jury, if there remains the slightest element of reasonable doubt in your minds, then it will be your duty, and I am sure your pleasure, to find in favour of the prisoner. Now let me recapitulate those facts. . . . The prisoner has said that when he went to see his wife that day he had no cause to kill her, since it was open to him to solve his problem by going away and living with his mistress. That may be so. But the question you have to decide, ladies and gentlemen, is whether that thought was in his mind at the time of the interview. He has admitted his extreme reluctance to take such a step. Is it not likely—is it not certain, in the light of all the evidence—that when that angry interview was at its height he thought of nothing but the obstacle in his path, and in the fury of the moment removed it once and for all . . .?"

Murgatroyd for the defence. "This is no ordinary case that you are trying, where evidence can be weighed against evidence. Charles Hilary stands in danger of his life for a crime of which he is so innocent, indeed so ignorant, that it is hard to know where to seek a reply. . . .

"We accept that Mrs. Scott did see a man leaving Clandon Mews at half-past three on August third, and that in general appearance he was not unlike the prisoner, and that she genuinely believes him to have been the prisoner. We accept that this man was in all probability the murderer of Louise Hilary. But we deny that he was Charles Hilary—we say that Mrs. Scott has made a mistake. Now how could such an honest but calamitous mistake have come about?

"All I can do, members of the jury, is to offer you a theory, but it is a theory so easily credible that it can hardly fail to raise a doubt in your minds. . . . Mrs. Scott knew that she

was being asked to pick out, if she could, the face of a man she had seen on one occasion. She was looking, in fact, for a *familiar* face out of those twelve lined up—a familiar face associated in her mind with a man leaving Clandon Mews.

"Now bear this in mind—Charles Hilary was not entirely a stranger to Clandon Mews. He had been there on several occasions prior to that Friday—first, when the house was being furnished, and later to plead personally with his wife for a divorce. Mrs. Scott herself was a frequent passer-by, for the mews lay on her everyday route to the shops. She has told us that to the best of her knowledge she had not set eyes on Hilary before August third, but is it not conceivable that this is the source of her mistake? All of you must agree that it is easier to remember the outlines of a face than to remember the exact occasion on which it was seen. Is it not conceivable that in fact it was on one of those *earlier* occasions that Mrs. Scott passed the end of the mews and saw Charles Hilary as he was leaving the house . . . ?

"The fingerprints. The visit to the Oval. Louise Hilary's dissolute life. . . . To prevent Hilary becoming free, she was prepared to go to extreme lengths of concealment about her own private life. I leave this question in your minds—did Louise Hilary have lovers, and if she did, is it not possible that one of them might have killed her? Can you reasonably rule it out?

"We know that she was about to leave the country at twenty-four hours' notice and without definite plans, a thing she had never done before. What impelled her to take that sudden and unprecedented step? Can we be certain that it was unconnected with the crime that was so soon to take place? The fact is that we know almost nothing about this woman's life during the past two years, and that very gap in our knowledge should give us pause. Is it safe to convict the prisoner against a background of such abysmal ignorance?

"Members of the jury, there is a doubt, and where there is a doubt, as my learned friend has told you—your duty is plain. Only by a verdict of 'Not Guilty' can you make certain of avoiding that most fearful of possibilities—a miscarriage of justice on a capital charge. . . ."

And then there was the judge with his platitudes and his qualifications, spreading a cloak of greyness over everything, while the afternoon yawned and the moment of judgment came nearer. With a final definition of circumstantial evidence to the jury, the judge stopped, quite suddenly. The jury shuffled. The fate of Charles Hilary was in their hands.

AND now Kathryn sat hunched in her seat, waiting. She was terrified—so terrified she could hardly speak. John, her brother, had wanted her to leave, to spare herself this agony of suspense, but she had seemed not to heed. Of course she had to stay.

Ten minutes passed, twenty minutes, half an hour. Her brother suggested that they should stretch their legs outside as other people were doing, smoke a cigarette, anything to keep themselves from thinking. She shook her head; she couldn't trust herself to move.

Forty minutes, fifty minutes. How long could one be tortured and keep sane? Then, suddenly, there was a distant stirring, a hum of excitement, raised voices, a bustling into seats. God, they were coming back!

"Members of the jury, are you agreed upon your verdict?"

"We are."

"Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty."

The blood drummed in Kathryn's head. Through a mist she saw Charles draw himself up; heard the judge's voice—"Have you anything to say . . . ?" and Charles's cold "Nothing at all." The ghastly, unbelievable words that would ring for ever in her ears, and a sonorous "Amen!" She felt herself falling, and clutched her brother's arm, and then there was darkness.

*To be continued next week*

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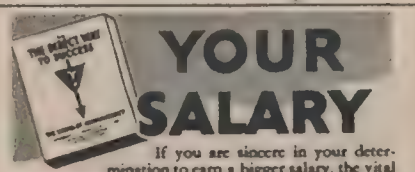


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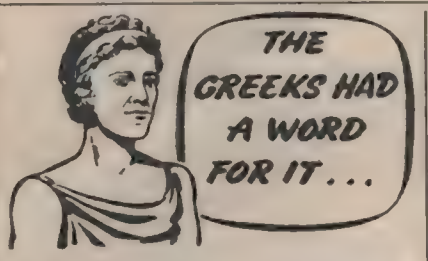


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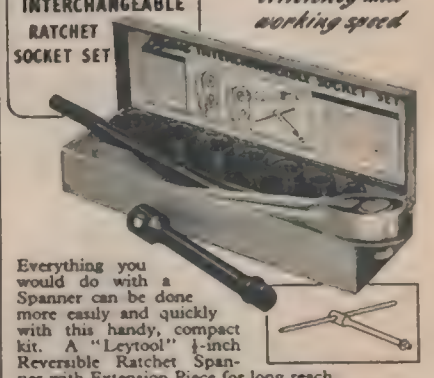

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## EL DORADO

*Continued from page 15*

save my lungs." He shrugged and fell silent.

Dan pondered over this for a few minutes, and asked suddenly: "Are you happy?"

At last the question was out. James started. Then he gave an odd, humorous grimace, and suddenly put back his head and laughed. It was painful. Then he slapped Dan's knee and said tolerantly, still laughing: "Sonny, you're a nice kid. Don't you let them get you down."

Dan sat quietly, looking shamefaced, feeling badly let down. He could not forgive James for laughing, but he clung to him, since there was no one else.

At this time, he was filled with wild daydreams that changed from hour to hour. He imagined himself travelling south, to the Rand, working as James had done, saving unheard-of sums of money, and then coming out, a rich man, in time to save his health. Or not coming out, but being carried on a stretcher, with his mother and James as sorrowing witnesses of this victim of the gold industry. Or he saw himself as the greatest mine expert of the continent, strolling casually among the mine-dumps and headgear of the Reef, calmly shedding his pearls of wisdom before awed financiers.

In this fantasy, Paul was always an assistant. Not his chief assistant, no; but one of several, perhaps the second in importance. Dan's behaviour was no less contradictory than his thinking. He asked James if he might come to the mine as an apprentice; he became emotionally confidential with Paul, and suggested they should start farming on a big scale together; and on the same day told his mother he would study for the scholarship.

He went back to school and studied, but half-heartedly, and failed.

At the end of the year, Paul took over the management of the farm, and Dan had to face at least another year at school. On this Maggie insisted.

Paul at once reorganized the farming. The vast, slowly eroding maize field was divided for the proper rotation of crops, and soon showed stripes of colour, from the rich, dark green of maize to the yellow blaze of sunflower. And instead of running loose herds of scrub cattle for use in the yoke, he began to build a dairy herd. Maggie saw that he would be a good farmer: slow, careful, taking no risks, nursing the soil back to health.

He had a talk with Alec and insisted that not more than a certain amount should be spent on "experiments." It was like pensioning-off his own father, and he felt it badly, and because of his discomfort behaved rather irritably.

It hurt Maggie, too. She saw father and son, at each end of the long dining-table, during that painful interview; so like each other to look at, and in the way they spoke.

Alec was like a petitioner; his face sagging with disappointment when Paul spoke harshly, but brightening pathetically when he was allowed concessions. The result was that he could keep four labourers for his own use, and spend £50 a year, provided that first he filled in all the abandoned diggings, for now one could not walk a hundred yards without risking one's neck in an old shaft or trench.

At the end of it, Paul came to Maggie, because of his guilt, saying, irritably: "Well, what can I do? I can't have the cattle breaking their legs because of his damned trenches." He was appealing for her support, and, of course, she gave it, because he was right.

Maggie was tender and maternal with her husband after it, for he, too, came appealing to her. He grumbled: "That young know-all, turning everything upside down, all theories and no experience."

At the word "theory," Maggie could not help smiling, but Alec did not see it. He went off, happily enough, to fill in the old trenches, and afterwards to a distant part of the farm, where he had found a new reef.

He seemed to be changing slowly; the divining was losing importance again. It appeared that his faith in it was waning.

There was a reason for that. A new mine had been found, about three miles off, on the next farm. Alec had once taken samples from the reef which fed this new mine, and he said worriedly: "How was it I didn't notice the gold? Perhaps I've been overlooking what's under my nose. . . ."

Dan came home as usual that Easter. He was now a pleasant, stocky, broad-faced youth, with a frank and cheerful glance and easy manner. Adolescence was fermenting in him. The only outward sign of it was his abruptness with his mother, as if there was something he could not forgive her; and he tried to avoid her. Maggie was worried by him, seeing him always difficult and sullen; but perhaps if she had been able to see him with the men on the mine, so natural and confident, she might have been comforted.

Things were difficult at James's mine. One day, when James was out all day working on a cyanide tank, Fred's wife had gone to his house and dismissed the native woman, under threat of the police. James came back late that evening, filthy and hungry, and found an empty kitchen, no food. He made inquiries from the labourers on the mine, and got evasive replies.

Next day he was again working on the tank, and at evening returned to a clean house and a good dinner. There

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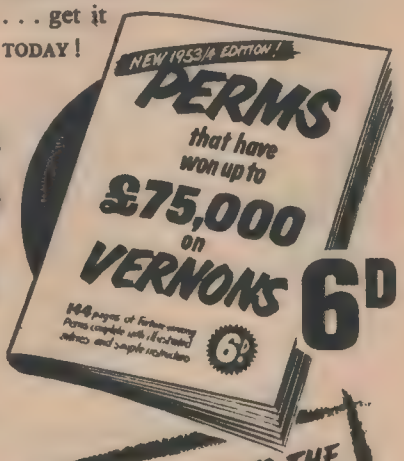
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was a young lad in the kitchen who could only say that "the missus" had engaged him. James knew what had happened, and was more than angry.

Often Fred's wife had nagged at James in that falsely gay, rallying way of hers, to get rid of the woman, who, she claimed, was a thief and a sloven and not even a good cook. James had replied, quietly, but unable to meet her eyes, that he preferred a woman in the kitchen to a man. And since the real issues had never been brought into the open, what was he to do now? When she insisted that this new cook-boy was clean and efficient, and he should be grateful to her, he grew frustratedly angry and looked at his brother for support. But Fred looked away.

One day, all this subterranean feeling exploded, and there was a bad quarrel, and though it was soon patched up, James refused to go near his brother's house, and the two men saw each other only at work.

Into this situation strolled Dan, and was met first by Fred's wife, who unloaded a long complaint about the unreasonableness and ingratitude of men. Dan listened sullenly, and refused to become an ally. He went off to the mine-shaft, and there found Fred, who nodded at him pleasantly, and said James was at the tank.

James was wearing only oil-sodden shorts, and was balancing his big body over the edge of the tank, leaning precariously down to tighten the screws of a waste-pipe. He stopped to greet the boy, who joyfully flung off his shirt and climbed beside him to help. They worked together all that day and, later, Dan went back with him for the evening meal. He saw the new cook, and understood. It was inevitable he should become James's ally, though he knew it meant not only a feud with Fred's wife but also with Fred, with whom, until now, he had had a pleasant friendship.

He could see that James was not happy—but perhaps that was not the way to put it. Happiness was a term the boy had already learned to use carefully. But certainly James had changed. There was a troubled, uneasy look about him, his eyes were clouded, instead of shrewd and direct, and his movements slower. Also, he was drinking more heavily.

Dan was with him for the whole of a weekend, during a drinking bout. James went through four bottles of whisky. He drank, slowly and persistently, until he became maudlin, and rather sentimental. This phase embarrassed the boy. Then James was hectoring and noisy and complained against his brother and his brother's wife until, nicely judging his own condition, he took a final half-glass of neat whisky, lay down on the bed comfortably, and passed out.

Dan sat beside his friend and waited for him to wake, which he did, in five or six hours, quite sober and very depressed, and the process was repeated.

Maggie was angry when he came home after three days' absence, but he said James had had a fever and needed someone to help. This Maggie accepted, though she was jealous of James, and thought him a poor sort of man for her son's companion.

There was a new responsibility in Dan. He was becoming a man, and though she grieved that this son, like Paul, had grown up and become quiet and sober while he was still a child, according to her standards, she was pleased that he would sit up three nights with a man who was ill, and then come walking quietly home across the veld, without any fuss or claim for attention, to demand a meal, and eat it, and then take himself off early to bed—all very calm and sensible, as if he were twenty-five and not sixteen.

During that Easter break, James and Dan, the man and the boy, were talking as if they were already working together. Dan would say casually: "When I come to work for you . . ." though, practically, this was absurd, for the mine could not afford an assistant, and did not need one. James began to say: "Better if I had my own show. Fred and I have been together too long, getting on each other's nerves."

"This one doesn't know his letters"

James and Dan wandered off through the veld at sundown with prospecting hammers, chipping at exposed reefs, turning over stones. They sank a trench or two, panned some samples; but nothing came of it.

Dan went back to school again, now really troubled about his future. At September he returned to find his family in a crisis.

Alec had found at last a reef that carried real gold; not much, but almost as much as the mine on the ridge. And, of course, he wanted to work it. Paul did not agree with him. Father and son wrangled for weeks. Paul said it was too risky, not good enough, there wasn't capital, they would have to borrow it, and that would be hanging a millstone around his, Paul's, neck—and so on.

Maggie listened derisively while the men argued. At last they brought experts from the town, and they gave the verdict. The reef was not rich enough; it was just under the workable minimum. So that ended it, and the experts went back to town.

Oddly enough, Alec seemed encouraged rather than depressed. He said to Maggie: "There you are. I always *said* there was gold and there is. Just as I said, on *this* farm!" He was defiant about it, and Maggie soothed him, and he went off to another reef. His divining rods now hung neglected on his office walls.

That September, the lazy month, was warm and slow and beautiful, the heat thick in the air. The big field was already ploughed, but it was several small fields, broken by lines of new saplings. Paul had worked himself into a leanness and tension that worried Maggie. She urged him to eat more, and bought him tonics, as she had when he was a child. He did as she told him, in a tolerant way, humouring her.

As for Dan, he had one more term at school, for he refused to undertake another year of it. She asked him what he intended to do, and he said he would work with James. She nodded ironically at the expected answer. She knew about the strained relations between the Ericson brothers. James was neglecting the mine as if he had already left it.

During that vacation, Dan helped James to cover the neighbour's farm, and there was a critical moment. So far, they had not touched the Barnes farm—that had been a tacit avoidance. But there was one evening when they walked along the invisible boundary, Dan lagging behind, his heart beating uncomfortably. There was no common-sense reason for it, but he felt he was betraying his father.

James halted on that part of the ridge which was above the quartz reef, and glanced at Dan. Dan nodded. They hesitated, and then, without speaking, walked over the boundary, making their way to the reef. The trenches had been roughly filled in; the reef was like a bleached and splintered bone.

The two walked slowly along it, pushing aside the long, dragging grass, and their hammers swung unused in their hands. At the end they turned and came back. Again they looked at each other.

Dan said clumsily: "It's legal to prospect anywhere," but he could not look at James, because of that extraordinary and irrational feeling of guilt.

James encouraged him: "We'll do no harm by looking. . . ."

And still they hung back; until, at the same moment, in a sudden rush of energy, they strode forward together and this time used their hammers.

They worked on the reef for several days, and sometimes James said humorously: "Your father does a thing thoroughly." For there was hardly a piece of that mile-long reef which was not examined.

Soon they left that reef and moved farther along the ridge. The ground was broken by jutting reefs, rich-looking outcrops, but here, it seemed, Alec had not been at all.

"Well, sonny," said James, "this looks more like it, hey?"

There was no reason why it should be more hopeful than any other place, but Dan was trusting to the old miner's instinct. It was fascinating to watch him moving over the ground, pondering over a slant of rock, a sudden uprush of sparkling white pebbles.

One morning they encountered Paul at a field's edge. At first, Dan stopped, and then strode forward, too defiantly, to his waiting brother. Paul's eyes were narrowed and hostile, and he demanded: "What are you doing on my land?"

"It's allowable to prospect, sonny," said James, but he, too, sounded uncomfortable—even deferential.

Paul frowned at the "sonny" and said: "You didn't have the common decency to ask!" He looked at his brother and not at James. Then, as there was no reply, he snapped: "As if one amateur gold-miner in a family isn't enough!" He walked off, rudely.

Dan was afraid Paul might tell his father before he did, and that evening, at table, he said: "Father, I want to tell you something." He ignored his glowering brother. "James and I are prospecting along your ridge."

Alec said mildly: "Are you, old chap? That's nice," and resumed his thoughts.

Dan persisted. "Father, we are working along from the old quartz reef."

Once again, Alec emerged, though reluctantly, considered this statement in as short a time as could decently be given it, and remarked: "Good reefs up there. I've got all my records if you want them. In my desk."

Dan signalled triumph over at Paul, who promptly got up from the table and stamped out. Alec looked vaguely after his son, but his surprise did not reach the surface. Later he remarked: "That ridge always did seem to me a likely spot. Might have another shot there myself."

Paul waited for Dan outside, and said in a low, resentful tone: "I won't have a mine there. Do you hear? I won't have it. It's good grazing soil. It's a damned outrage, this prospecting business, and a decent government wouldn't allow it."

Dan grinned at the last phrase. Recently Paul had taken to such remarks, and he was going to political meetings. "You can't stop me," he said, off-hand. Afterwards, he was ashamed, because of the cheap victory. He approached his brother in an awkward, but sincere, way, and Paul accepted an unworded apology.

Dan told James there would be no unpleasantness if they prospected, and James said with that short laugh: "Lucky, isn't it, when we're here already?"

He had dug a couple of trenches and sunk a twenty-foot shaft, and one day he said to Dan, quite casually: "Looks as if this might be it."

Dan was excited, but James's calmness did not feed excitement. Gold! To find gold! He found it hard to believe that James was really certain, for he continued so methodically, hopping in and out of his trenches in a businesslike way, clambering up and down his shaft on a makeshift ladder, emerging with a handful of dust or a couple of lumps of rock, and repeating: "Not bad, not bad at all."

So flat was the scene, just a few untidy diggings in the low scrub, with the low, smoky September sky pressing down, that Dan was unable to believe they had really struck it. It all went on for weeks, while James surveyed the whole area. Then he sent some rocks in to the Assay people and they came back confirmed.

Dan thought: Surely this would be the moment for rejoicing? But no; all James said was: "Well, we won't get rich on this lot!" It seemed that he might even shrug the whole thing away, and start again somewhere else.

Once again the experts came out, and this time gave their sanction. Yes, it was workable; might even turn out, with luck, quite prosperous. There they all stood over the diggings, the city men in the crisp khaki they donned for excursions to the veld, making their cautious pronouncements, and it was not only Dan who felt cheated of glory.

Paul was there, showing his scepticism, as a matter of principle. Maggie was there, as usual holding a frond of leaves as shield against the sun, over her face, as derisory and sceptical as Paul. Alec was there, too, of course, expectant and bright-eyed, but also rather subdued, like a child who has waited too long for the party to begin.

James's brother was there, too, in no very generous mood, and he extinguished the last chance of a festival atmosphere by muttering: "Bound to find gold here sooner or later. Couldn't fail. Probably an extension of the reef I'm working."

Then they all went off, to their various homes. Anti-climax. The end

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which promised no dramatic beginning. The long, slow let-down into success. And what a success, all hedged about with provisos and cautions, the worst of which was—where would they find the capital?

In the meantime, the important piece of ground lay waiting, guarded by the legal pegging notices, like signboards, on which were tacked the printed linen notices listing fines and penalties against any person, even Paul and Alec, who came near the still invisible gold without permission.

Then out came the businessmen and the lawyers, and there was a long period of signing and sealing and arranging terms.

Alec seemed rather lost. He went striding over the pegged ground with his divining rods, which appeared to agree that there was gold below; he kept his boys at work on his own trenches, but hardly ever went near them, and he spent more time with Maggie than he had done for years.

One day he startled her by saying: "Well, things are looking up for us, aren't they? You can go home to Scotland now, for a holiday."

She noted the *you*: if she ever did get a holiday she would take it by herself, it seemed. But she was more perturbed by something else. Alec was talking as if this were *his* mine. He waited for the machinery to arrive as impatiently as James and Dan.

WHEN the lorries came bumping over the rough roads, loaded with the heavy girders, the sections of tank, the casing for the shafts, Alec was waiting for them—he was over at the new mine every day, as if he had a right to be there.

Maggie said awkwardly to Dan: "Danny, don't be impatient with your father. This is a great thing for him, you know."

Dan met her serious look and said: "He's quite sensible really, mother—I mean . . ." he stumbled a little. "I mean, when he's got something to do, when he's got someone to tell him——"

"So now you're giving orders to your own father!" she exclaimed sorrowfully.

"Oh, *I* don't give orders," he said, turning away in his old impatient way. Then he came back. "Mother," he said, half proud and half uneasy, "James said we might give him a job—what do you think?"

"We?" she said softly, looking at this stripling, just out of his school, part owner of what might one day be a rich mine.

"Well, Mother, he did say *I* must be a partner, because we found it together——"

"Oh, all right," she said. "I didn't mean to pour cold water. I know it's a fine thing for you. But you can't be a boss to your own father."

"I know," he said uncomfortably. "But I can't suggest to James that my father must be a partner. He hasn't done anything to earn it."

"He's spent ten years working on gold," said Maggie irrationally; and saw Dan give her a look which she understood.

So things were left, for a time. Alec was over at the mine every day by the time the sun rose, and did not leave until dark. He was working like a young man, helping with the heavy machinery, supervising the labourers—he even *looked* like a young man; certainly younger than the responsible and serious Paul, who was now irritable about politics, as well as about the farm.

It was an impossible position. James, always easy-going, accepted it, but Dan felt more awkward every day. Once Maggie said: "Danny, you know your father doesn't care about money, he doesn't notice it——"

"Well?" demanded Dan, half aggressively.

"He doesn't know about accounts and balance sheets——" She found it impossible to finish.

"You mean, we should make him a partner, technically, and then cheat him of his share of money?" asked Dan, roughly.

This was exactly what Maggie had meant; but, of course, put like that, she denied it.

Dan went to James and told the story as a good joke against his mother. But when he had finished he looked hopefully at James, and this hope was confirmed when James nodded and said: "Your father's done a lot of work for us, sonny."

Dan hesitated, and then said: "Mother says it wouldn't be right for him to work here, if I'm a partner and he's not."

James said in that familiar sardonic way: "Well, he *is* working here, isn't he?"

But something had to be done. Everyone knew it. And not one of them could bring themselves to face Alec with the simple and obvious fact that he was putting his son in an unfair position.

James gave Dan a long, shrewd look and said: "Well, sonny, your father behaves as if he belongs here, and no one's going to stop him. But you say it isn't right you should be over him?"

Dan hesitated, and said, "That's right." There was a bitter taste in his mouth and a look of bitterness on his face. James nodded. "Right, then we'll fix it."

The agreements were drawn up so that James had half share of the profits and Dan and his father a quarter each. James kept full control.

Maggie, when she heard this, felt a pang for Dan. It meant in effect that to salve Alec's pride he must forgo what had been promised him, that he should be equal partner with James. She thanked him emotionally, saying: "You're a good lad, Dan. I'm grateful to you."

Alec sensed nothing of the sacrifice. He behaved as if he had been given nothing but his due.

There was worse for the boy to swallow.

One evening, at the mine, Maggie saw Alec come strolling over from the shafthead. He looked a proud and contented man. She was sitting by James and Dan on some stones, listening while they planned new developments.

Alec stood before them, smiling, and said calmly: "Well, I always said I'd find gold if I stuck to it."

MAGGIE heard Dan draw in his breath sharply. In his eyes there was the oddest look of indignation, baffled justice and — reluctant amusement. Then she saw James prod her son gently with his elbow.

"That's right," said James pleasantly. "It's the stickers that get the prizes every time."

Dan slowly released his breath, and sat quiet, suppressing his anger. Then, suddenly, he began to laugh. Alec looked puzzled for a moment or two, but soon his thoughts went back into his dream world and the faraway look of triumph returned to his eyes.

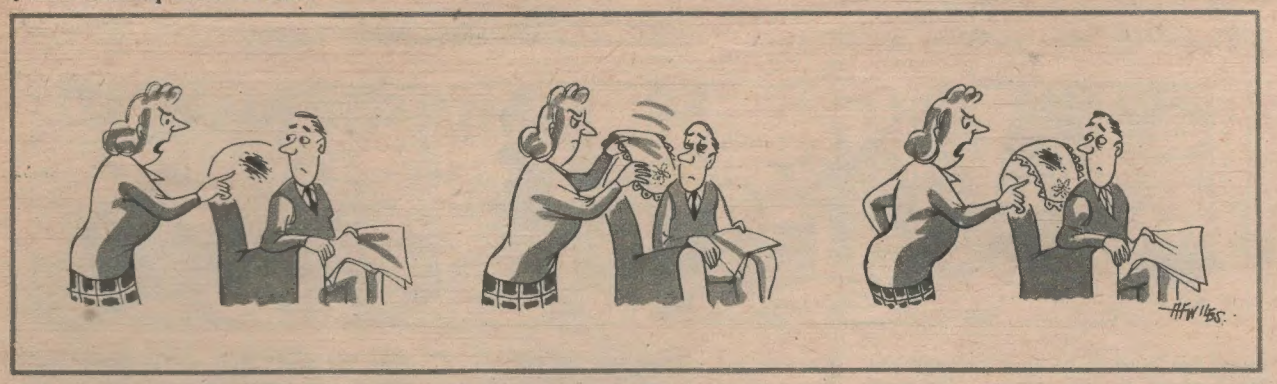
Dan laughed and laughed; and as he laughed he felt his resentment pouring away. He was a grown man now, there was work to be done, he stood on his own feet, free at last of his father—and perhaps of his mother, too.

And as she heard him laughing, Maggie saw, with a feeling of tired relief, that Dan and Paul would go their own ways; and that Alec would be allowed, for always, to believe that he had found his goldmine.

After that, Alec seemed to lose interest in the mine and the machinery. He would hang about the workings, asking Dan: "Mind if I use my rod around here for a bit? . . . Come on, there's a good kid. I'm in a hurry."

And as James and Dan directed the labourers and the mine-stamps thudded busily, Alec walked in circles and zigzags, the tails of his old bush shirt flying, the rod rising and falling in his hands like some kind of trapped insect. He was oblivious of everything. Sometimes they had to pull him aside to avoid being hurt by the machinery.

And when, later on, they broke it to him that they had found a new reef, even richer than the first, all he said, in a proud, pleased voice, was: "Well, that proves it. I told you so, didn't I? I always told you so." THE END



## THE DESPERATE MISSION OF SU MEI

*Continued from page 24*

door in the wheelchair, she turned with eyes like stars and said, "On the way I must buy some roses. She loves them. I have some money."

He murmured, "Just a minute," and left her alone in the chair in the long corridor.

In thirty seconds he was back, with a guilty look on his face and four pink roses in his hand . . . the first flowering of Matron's cherished bush. "Fresher than shop ones," he said, "and nothing to pay."

While he wheeled her past the main exit, she was tying them into a posy. She only looked up, puzzled, when he knocked on a door half way down another long corridor.

There was a quiet word from the room inside and Richard Brown opened the door.

"A visitor for you, Sister Rosa," he said.

It was a tiny room, flooded with soft reflected sunlight. On a bed, propped high with pillows, lay a gaunt old woman, her face almost as white as the lining to the nun's hood that shaded it. The fever chart above the bed showed a graph that spelt danger to anyone, like Richard Brown, who understood it. And above the graph was written "Sister Bonaventura," the name that had been too difficult for the tongues of small Chinese orphans.

The old, slowly blinking eyes failed to recognize the visitor until she spoke.

"Dear Sister Rosa, it is Su Mei come to bring you some roses and a message."

There was a cry from the bed. "Su Mei! Ah, God bless you, my child! Another prayer answered!" Thin, trembling fingers fluttered out to take the roses and the hand that offered them. "And roses!"

"And a message," the child said, leaning from her chair to help shaking fingers untie the large ribbon bow. "Read the message, Sister Rosa," she said, with the simple excitement of a child at a Christmas tree.

Richard Brown went to the far side of the bed and held one end of the scarlet ribbon while Su Mei held up the other and Sister Rosa read the message embroidered on it. She read the Chinese script from right to left, unconsciously whispering the words in English, with an accent that echoed Naples and Manhattan.

"'A greeting on her eightieth birthday to Sister Rosa, whom we have loved from our smallest years and will love until we are as old as she. From Li Lan, Fai Kua, Su Mei, Chu Tsia. . . .'" Twenty-eight names altogether, embroidered by their owners' hands with skill they owed to Sister Rosa.

THE old nun hid her tears in Matron's roses and whispered a short prayer in Latin.

"We never forget you," Su Mei told her. "Our new teachers would not let us come and say goodbye to you when you came out of prison, but every day we remember and every night we pray for you, in our beds in the dark. We do not forget. But when we remembered your birthday was near, and how you loved birthdays and made ours so happy, we wanted to send you a message. Only we didn't know any address for you and we were afraid they would open our letter and burn it. So we decided, in the dark in our dormitory, that we would embroider a greeting and one of us would bring it to Hongkong and find you."

There was a party Richard Brown was going to be late for, but he had no thoughts of leaving. The spectacle of healing was what he most loved, and here was miracle healing for two simple hearts—healing, even, for one sick body. But not the other . . . it was clear to him that Sister Rosa, who loved birthdays, would never see another. Only now did the old eyes take in the pale exhaustion of the young face, the hospital chair.

"But, dear Su Mei, you are sick, too!"

"Not sick, Sister Rosa. The doctor has made me well already. There were some bad policemen at the frontier. I had to swim across."

Minutes were taken up with Sister Rosa's horror. Finally she took up the scarlet ribbon again and asked, "But how was it you, dear Su Mei, who was chosen to bring me this wonderful gift?"

Su Mei told her: "We made paper boats, Sister Rosa, as you taught us when we were little, and raced them in the river."

The old hands went out in compassion.

"Oh, my poor Su Mei. And you lost."

The girl darted a glance of mischief up at Richard Brown as she answered.

"No, Sister Rosa," she said. "I won."

THE END

## ABOVE US THE WAVES

*Continued from page 21*

hazards of mechanized war. Its drama can rarely have been so acute as on that morning on the bed of Kaafjord.

Apart from Place, the men in X7 were Sub-Lieutenant Whittam, the first lieutenant; Engine Room Artificer Whitley and, as diving officer, Sub-Lieutenant Aitken. They were all highly efficient submariners and had given Place magnificent service on the run-in and during the attack on Tirpitz. If any crew could have dealt with the situation, this one could.

Within a few moments of her commander jumping from the casing to the gunnery target—he left the midget with the cry "Here goes the last of the Places"—the X7 was lying on the bottom.

"Bill" Whittam took charge immediately. The sets of the Davis submarine escape apparatus were cut down from their stowage positions, and each of the three men put one on. Fortunately, the hatch had been shut in time as X7 plunged and the craft, though holed externally, was comparatively dry inside.

Aitken, the expert diver, took the others through the escape drill as calmly as if he were instructing a class on some training exercise in far-away Scotland. He himself felt totally confident. It had been proved to him by precept and experience that the pressure of 120 feet of water was nothing to worry unduly about—provided the correct procedure was followed and no one lost his head. It was simply a question of putting on the escape apparatus, stationing themselves under the two escape hatches, flooding the craft and waiting for the pressure to equalize and allow them to float one by one to the surface.

So much for the theory. In practice, things were not to work out so easily. Aitken's idea was to let Whittam and Whitley escape by the fore and aft hatches respectively, and together. He himself would follow by the first hatch that became available.

But, once clamped in the cumbersome Davis sets, they found it impossible, in the confined tubular space, to pass by each other. Aitken was thus left in the forward, or "Wet and Dry" compartment, whose hatch he had perforce to use. In the control-room stood Whitley and Whittam, ready to go out by the second hatch, situated at the after end of the room.

### An Eerie Moment

Aitken did not like the situation; he would have preferred to see the others safely away before saving himself. However, time was passing and the dispositions would have to serve. As soon as everyone was equipped with sets and satisfied with their working, Whittam ordered the vents to be opened. The midget began to flood.

It was an eerie moment. Above and around them the dull thuds of the depth charges reverberated through the immense walls of water. The interior of the boat, lately so animated, was now silent and, it seemed, deserted. For months, in training and in war, this cubicle of machinery had been their home. They had grown to know and love it. Now, threatening to become their coffin, it was bleak and hostile.

No one knew what was in store for him when, if ever, he reached the surface. The fading air was full of questions. Had the Tirpitz been sunk? Where was Godfrey Place? What had happened to Cameron and X6? And to Henty-Creer? These speculations seemed to touch another life, infinitely removed from them. Only the icy water, the mute promise of salvation, was real. It filtered slowly into the hour glass the midget had become.

It filtered in, but far too slowly. Whittam and Aitken asked each other how its entry could be speeded. They tried to open the remaining inboard vents. All were stuck. There was nothing for it but a long, patient wait.

The water rose gradually, and with it a chilling depression invaded the waiting men. It reached the ankles, the calves and knees, it lapped about the thighs, it reached the waist. The water was numbingly cold and soon, as all three realized, it was going to be lethal. Sooner or later it would reach a battery, flood it and scald out the poisoning fumes. Then, if they were not to die where they stood, the men would have to breathe their escape oxygen, drawing thus on a bank that gave no credit. . . .

After ninety minutes the water touched a battery. Something fused softly and the fumes gushed out, bringing darkness, filling the boat, riding like scum on the surface of the too-slowly mounting water. The men felt a burn in the nostrils and throat; they turned on the oxygen in their sets, breathing as shallowly as they dared.

In pitch blackness now, they held their positions by the feel of the submerged machinery round them. Aitken put up his arm and felt the hatch above. It was still well clear of the water. Another foot, he judged, and the hour glass would be full. Above them the depth charging went on.

When he reckoned that the shell was almost fully flooded, Aitken pushed up

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against the hatch. It did not yield. Other worries beset him. He climbed back into the control-room, for he did not feel happy about Whitley, who had been leaning against the periscope, obviously affected by the fumes.

Groping his way through, Aitken reached the periscope and found his worst fear realized: Whitley had slipped down. The diver bent under the black water, searching for the body. Whitley, he suspected, had drawn too freely on his oxygen, but there might still be some way of bringing him round. The body was there; Aitken bent over it, felt for the breathing bag on the escape set and squashed it in his fingers. It was flat. Next, he groped for the emergency cylinders, but found that they, too, had been consumed. He knew too much to doubt the evidence; Whitley must be dead.

### On The Point Of Death

His next concern was to find Whittam. All this exertion was drawing dangerously on his own reserves of oxygen, but Aitken knew where his duty lay. He straightened up and immediately realized that he was on the point of death himself. His breath drew nothing after it but a hammering of the heart; he knew then, sickly, that his bottles were empty, too.

The last dregs of vitality remaining gave him the strength to break the two emergency oxylets on his set.

They gushed out feebly, giving a meagre breath apiece. Now there was nothing attaching him to life but the little breath in his lungs—that, and his courage. He turned from the control-room and felt his way back to the compartment for a last attempt on the shuttered hatch.

He reached it and lost consciousness. Whether by some moribund reaction he managed to open the hatch, or whether it had opened itself under his own weight, Aitken was never to know.

The next thing he knew was a hissing stream of oxygen bubbles playing round his head as he sped through the black water to the surface. He even found—an inverted parachutist—as he went headlong upwards, that he had unrolled the apron of his escape apparatus and was holding it in front of him to check a too-rapid ascent. This vital detail pleased him enormously. When sense had long since fled, the discipline of the training tank had stepped in and wrenched him back to life.

He broke surface in the now less animated fjord. Twenty minutes later he was climbing from a picket boat into the Tirpitz. It was 11.15; Aitken's ordeal had lasted two hours and forty minutes. To him, it might have been two and a half hundred years.

Once in the battleship, Aitken was ordered by a surly officer to strip naked. The upper deck was both public and freezing, and he was very glad when allowed to go below, given a blanket and told he could sleep on a hammock rack. His interrogation was brief, and the welcome he got from his five companions was almost as warm as the drink a German orderly put into his hand.

He would have been a completely happy man but for two things—the death of his friends and the fact that the Tirpitz was still on the surface. Only the one, he thought, could have compensated for the other.

The Tirpitz was still afloat, but her war was virtually over. The fact that she was not resting on the bottom of Kaafjord was largely due to the limited evasive action her crew had been able to take after the scuttling of Cameron's X6. The battleship's log records that at 8.12 there were "two heavy consecutive detonations to port at 1/10 second interval." The first explosion was abreast "X" turret, about eight yards from the ship. The second from fifty to sixty yards off the bow, in X6's last position.

### The Explosion's Damage

The first effects of the explosion were dramatic. After crashing back into the water from her jump of six feet in the air, the battleship took an immediate list to port of five degrees. All lights failed and oil fuel started to spread out like a stain from amidships. Five hundred tons of water were taken aboard. "A" and "C" gun turrets were put out of action; so, more seriously, were all three main engines. Also out of action were the anti-aircraft control positions, one generator room, the hydrophone station, range finding gear and port rudder, and other and less important items of equipment.

Two months after the attack, a report was sent to the German Naval War Staff, stating that "as a result of the successful midget submarine attack the battle cruiser Tirpitz had been put out of action for months."

In fact, the War Staff considered that the great ship would never again attain full operational efficiency. The judgment was correct. It was not till April of the following year that the Tirpitz was fit to leave Alten Fjord. It was her last sortie. A few months later she was first damaged and then destroyed by air attack. The midget's sting had been mortal.

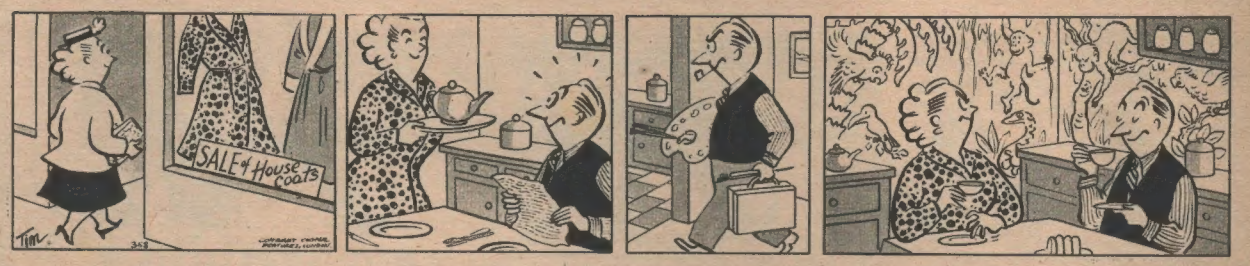
In casualties, the Germans scarcely came off better. One man was killed and forty wounded by the force of the explosion itself. In the free-for-all firing that followed the blast, about a hundred men lost their lives or were seriously wounded.

Indeed, one of the most cheering aspects of the attack was the alarming and instant demoralization of what was thought to be the cream of the German Navy serving in the finest ship of their fleet. These terrified sailors pumping lead all over the landscape—and into each other—showed few of the qualities associated with a Master Race. The four young British submariners, who were privileged spectators of the rout, found the party highly encouraging.

The action was over, but a very important part of the force that set out from Scotland was still in the neighbourhood. The six big submarines were ranging round the coast in the open sea in certain definite planned positions. Their task was to recover any midgets that might have got away from the

## OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM

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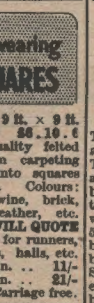

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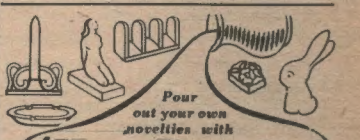

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anchorages unharmed. In the event, only one midget was to get back to its parent.

The mechanical difficulties that had decided Lieutenant Hudspeth to abandon his attack on the Scharnhorst were more or less irreparable. X10 had been difficult to trim ever since her launching from the submarine Sceptre. Worse was to come when, as the craft reached the mouth of Alten Fjord, one of her side cargoes of amatol flooded, making the boat career about, as one of the crew put it, like a "mad porpoise." Later the craft began to leak above the main switchboard, an accident which blew all the fuses.

In spite of these serious breakdowns, Hudspeth and his crew somehow worked their boat up Alten Fjord. It was only when the damping bottles of the gyro-compass refused to work and the magnetic compass light was flooded that Hudspeth decided that his wreck of a boat was unable to attack.

### Cured Their Blues

He took his craft to the bottom four and a half miles from Kaafjord. It was a maddening situation—to have overcome almost all the dangers of the approach and to be stopped finally when so near the target. The gloom of the men was dissipated when they heard the welcome sound of the explosions on the morning of the twenty-second; someone, at least, had got it.

It was not till late that evening that Hudspeth was ready to take his craft—now, in some places, literally tied up with string—to the surface and attempt the long and stealthy trip back to the open sea. With great skill and determination, he and his crew nursed their boat through the minefields and up the twisting channels that led to the planned positions of the big submarines. X10 waited in several of these positions for five whole nights.

On the twenty-seventh, having drawn blank after blank, Hudspeth decided to play his last card. He knew of one more position farther south; it was called Ofjord, on the north coast of Söröy island. If he found nothing there, Hudspeth planned to make for Iceland or Russia, a decision of startling courage—and typical of the man.

But no submarine appeared as X10 patrolled close inshore during the evening and into the night. At midnight Hudspeth announced he would give their luck just one more hour's grace. Their luck relented. With six minutes to go before the deadline a submarine was sighted. She was the Stubborn, right on her planned position.

Hudspeth's story deserved a better sequel. On the way back to Scotland, when four hundred miles from the Shetlands, a violent gale made it dangerous to continue the tow. Reluctantly the crew of the midget made the hazardous changeover to the big submarine. The tow was released and X10 was sent to the bottom. So died the last of the six midgets that had left Scotland a month before.

### The Little 'Uns Won

The six survivors of the X-craft crews were well treated aboard the Tirpitz, by whose crew their bravery was greatly admired. They spent the rest of the war in a camp in Germany. Lieutenants Place and Cameron were awarded the Victoria Cross. Aitken, the gallant diver of X7, received the D.S.O., as did Sub-Lieutenants Kendall and Lorimer. Engine Room Artificer Goddard, also of Cameron's crew, was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal.

The story of the Tirpitz is essentially a story of the sea. The men who made the story possible were seamen first, last and all the time.

Apart from the skill of planning and the determination in execution, the tale of Operation Source has a vital human appeal. It was cheeky. The "little 'un" took the big chap on and came off best. The young men who went into Alten Fjord had what Winston Churchill calls the "canine qualities—courage, fidelity and love of the chase." They thought it fun, and they achieved a great victory.

*NEXT WEEK: A midget makes a lone attack on a floating dock*

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**"3 Luxury Meals" AS BONUSES**

Whole Roast Chicken, Ham and Tongue (all tinned) accompany each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

## CASH AND FOOD PRIZES FOR XWORDS!

### This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

**Across Clues** — **XWORD 855**

2. Brilliant this may well make sportsman very popular
5. Very many chips are cut and
7. Lots of people like to do this in gardening
11. Many a man feels like this after a glorious blow-out
12. Man being blackmailed may be frightened of
13. When baby's ill in bed, mother won't merely do this
14. When immediate danger threatens, it is no time to

**Down Clues**

1. In one sense, flower can rightly be called this
2. In changeable weather even the gentlest of breezes may become
3. One generates certain amount of heat
4. An old housedog may well prefer to stay in if it's this
6. One can be very rough indeed
8. To be seen regularly in sales
9. Playing cricket vigorously will make a man this
10. One kind of this can keep you dry whilst a different kind can soak you

**£100 FIRST PRIZE**

**AWARDS VALUE £25**

**among 1st Runners-up and up to**

**25 JOHNNY-BASKETS**

**EACH VALUE £2**

Strong but elegant Shopping Baskets made by blind workers and filled with larder luxuries—one with each Runner-up Award value £1 or over.

**Up to 500 "SIGNPOST" PRIZES**

**—one for each 2nd Runner-up**

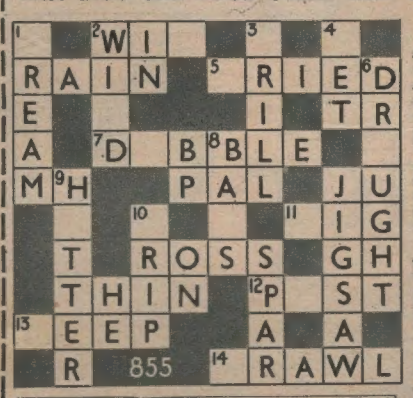
### 3 BIG CHEQUES WON XWORD 850

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Camps. 6, Mule. 8, Slip. 12, Peers. 13, Met. 14, Barn. 15, Post. DOWN: 2, Pens. 3, Mumps. 4, Reach. 5, Push. 7, Page. 9, Parson. 10, Packet. 11, Map.

THREE £100 SHARERS: Mrs. M. D. Chapman, 9 Collingwood Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne; N. J. Harrison, 47 Queen Street, Portsmouth; Mrs. A. R. Morley, 26 Richmond Crescent, Highams Park, London, E.4. Winners also share £25 Holiday Cash.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 38 entrants. Useful "Signpost" Prizes to 2nd Runners-up.

**WIN £100 and FOOD PRIZE with this COUPON**




| CLUE | EXTRA ANSWER | Total Fee |
|---|---|---|
| No. | | 6d. |
| No. | | 1s. |
| No. | | 2s. |

*(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)*

Puzzle and form strictly copyright **855** Closing Postmark MON., SEPT. 21

I enclose P.O. value ..... No.....

Signed .....

Address.....

.....

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.).

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated October 3.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per contest and to entry equal to 16 Squares. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

Making tea in *Bullets* "Ideal Kitchen" No. 4 are Mr. and Mrs. Wood (Newport Pagnell). With £100 to spend they chose: stainless-steel sink unit and mixer, kitchen cabinet, inlaid lino, enamel-top table, electric iron, toaster, tea-set, coffee percolator, kettle, matting, carpet sweeper . . . what would *you* choose?

## HOW TO WIN

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

**Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"**

World Of Plenty
Nature's Plan
If We're Not Careful
Brotherly Love
Under The Microscope
To Prevent Accidents
That Bang
Mother's Dream
Not Forgotten
The Silvery Moon
Bigger And Better
When Dad Got Stung
Whizzing Along
In The Baronial Hall
Crooked
Sleepytown's Team
Came In First
Electronic Brain
Rang A Bell
Falling Over Each Other

**Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions**

.....In The Kitchen
Didn't Need.....
Fresh From The.....
Other People's.....
Disappointed .....
Down Swooped A.....And

### POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,903 (or Xword 855), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

**BIG INCREASE in PRIZE-MONEY NEXT WEEK!**

**YOUR FIRST "BULLET" FREE THIS WEEK**

## "Bullets" Winners 1,898

FIRST PRIZE, £300 plus Seaside Holiday: F. Coackley, 8 Holmes Street, Cheadle, Cheshire:

**One Who Knows Way Over "Mountains," "Shepherd."**

£25: H. Cullingford, 148 Westfield Road, Harpenden: IN THE HEART OF COUNTRYSIDE—DUMP YOUR *Mental* "LITTER"!

£20: Miss B. Clark, 4 Pinfold Avenue, Blackley, Manchester: JAM TOMORROW—"HOME-MADE" IN OUR FACTORIES.

OTHER AWARDS. £15: D. Rogers, 31 Court Road, Orpington, Kent: SCIENCE'S SEARCHLIGHT — AS YET. "PENCIL TORCH"? £10: W. A. Dickie, 29 Jubilee Road, Leeds: EYE FOR AN EYE—FOR ANNIHILATION! £9: L. Little, 6 Kinmel Terrace, Pensarn, Abergele: IN THE HEART OF FRANCE—"RESISTANCE" *Endangering* "CONSTITUTION." £8: R. B Lacey, 69 Sunnyside Road, Chesham: DIDN'T HURRY HIMSELF—CRAFTSMAN—WORRY HIMSELF, BOSS. £7: H. Simpson, Faversham Hotel, Ealing Common, W.5: IN THE HEART OF MAN—HUMANITY BEATS, TILL "DRUMS"—£6: A. Phillips, 35 Westdown Drive, Thurmaston, Leics: LADY TURNSTYLE — FOLLOWING HOUNDS? BEHIND HOT-DOGS! £5: Mrs. F. C. King, 71 Sunnyside Road, Chesham: NOW WE'VE A BABY—THE "CHANGES"!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see *"Bullets" Bulletin*. 50 *Bullets* Season Tickets and 1,500 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

**RULES** 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated October 10, and in JOHN BULL dated October 17), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, October 3, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,903 result.)

EXAMPLE ..... **FREE**

BULLET .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

EX. ..... **6d.**

B. .....

**1,903**
**Closing Postmark MON., SEPT. 21**

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O.

Value.....

No.....

Signed.....

Address.....

.....

**REMEMBER to POST this LABEL for £2,000 NEWS**

Post JOHN BULL this label for FREE issue of *"Bullets" Bulletin* dated Oct. 3 containing details of *Bullets* and Xword Prizes value over £2,000.

**FREE THIS WEEK**

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

.....

716

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by an entirely NEW process

New
# PURITAN
## keeps active hands attractive hands!

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**Freshens your home!** As soon as you use this new Puritan, you'll notice a lovely clean tang in the air. It's the new Puritan freshness—so pleasantly different from other soaps. For all those washing jobs, for all those cleaning jobs that soap does best—use the new Puritan. Your hands will be *so* grateful!

***Not a brick, not a block . . . but a good-looking, handy tablet of household soap —that's the new PURITAN!***

Ask for
**PURITAN**
—the gentle Green Soap
with OLIVE OIL

TWO TABLETS 11p

PU 132-454

CROSFIELDS (C W G) LIMITED, WARRINGTON

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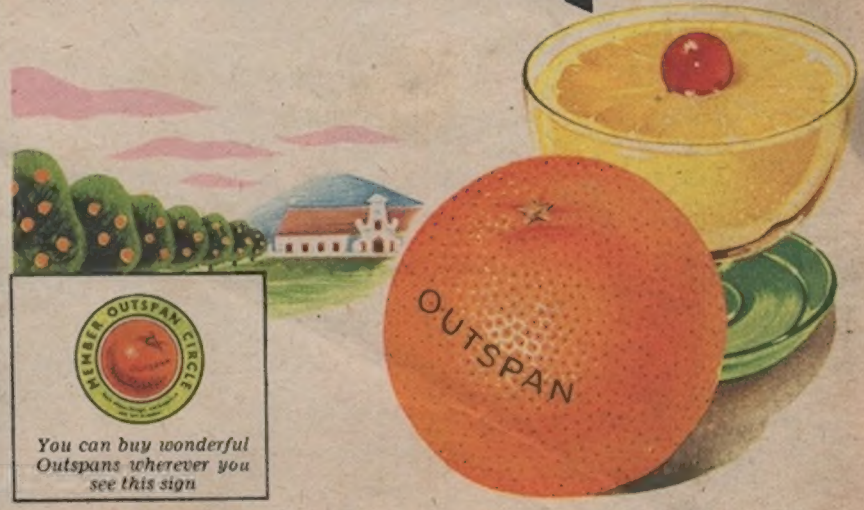
caravan or camp—
see your picnic orange
bears the Outspan stamp!

# for Orange

O Whatever your leisure pleasure—doing or dozing, lazy or crazy—luscious Outspan Oranges are so refreshing when you feel like 'something extra-nice'. They're thin-skinned, sweeter, rich in Vitamin C and *good* for you. Equally delicious are succulent, tangy Outspan Grapefruit—the very thing to brighten breakfast, or *any* meal.

# for Outspan

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